THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

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DELHI, KOLKATA, CHENNAI HOTSPOTS FOR ABDOMINAL OBESITY: STUDY

The three metros have emerged as hotspots for abdominal obesity among both men and women, the study in the *Nature Scientific* journal reports

SEDENTARY JOBS, PROCESSED FOODS BLAMED

The study by researchers from the Health Systems Transformation Platform found over half of women aged 15-49 (56.6%) and nearly half of men aged 15-54 (48.9%) in India have abdominal obesity. The researchers attributed this trend to long hours in sedentary jobs, increased reliance on motorised transport, and the widespread consumption of processed foods

HIGHER PREVALENCE AMONG URBAN RESIDENTS

- Higher levels of abdominal obesity were seen among older adults, wealthier groups, and urban residents, the researchers noted
- "Metropolitan districts surrounding Delhi NCR, Kolkata, and Chennai demonstrated elevated prevalence among both sexes," the study noted. Abdominal obesity was measured using the waist-to-hip ratio

NFHS-5

DATA OF OVER 7 LAKH PEOPLE FROM 707 DISTRICTS WERE EXAMINED

CHENNAI ▪ MADURAI ▪ VIJAYAWADA ▪ BENGALURU ▪ KOCHI ▪ HYDERABAD ▪ VISAKHAPATNAM ▪ COIMBATORE ▪ KOZHIKODE ▪ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM ▪ BELAGAVI ▪ BHUBANESWAR ▪ SHIVAMOGGA ▪ MANGALURU ▪ TIRUPATI ▪ TIRUCHY ▪ TIRUNELVELI ▪ SAMBALPUR ▪ HUBBALLI ▪ DHARMAPURI ▪ KOTTAYAM ▪ KANNUR ▪ VILLUPURAM ▪ KOLLAM ▪ TADEPALLIGUDEM ▪ NAGAPATTINAM ▪ THRISSUR ▪ KALABURAGI

US rescues airman in daring mission

Aviator scales 7,000-ft ridge to avoid capture by Iran; Trump says Tehran will be hit on Tuesday if Strait remains closed

DAY 37 | WAR WATCH

AGENCIES @Washington, Tehran

A wounded US Air Force colonel survived 36 gruelling hours in the rugged mountains of southern Iran, evading capture by Iranian forces before Navy SEAL commandos extracted him in a dramatic night-time operation, which President Donald Trump termed nothing short of "miraculous."

Armed with only a pistol and moving on injured legs, the colonel — a weapons systems officer who had ejected from an F-15E Strike Eagle fighter jet shot down over southern Iran on Friday — navigated treacherous terrain to stay ahead of enemy patrols. At one point, he scaled a 7,000-foot ridgeline while American aircraft bombed an approaching Iranian convoy to buy him time, *The Mail* reported Sunday.

US aviators undergo SERE training in the event they have to eject over hostile territory -- survival, evasion, resistance and escape. They wear a combat vest with a radio/GPS-coded beacon to transmit their position, while they also carry water, food, first-aid material and a pistol in order to survive. The airman was wounded after his ejection but could still walk, according to news outlet Axios, which cited a US official.

Iran had placed a bounty on the officer's head, setting off a race between Tehran and Washington to locate the missing aviator. "Everything is being thrown at finding the missing airman," a source close to the President told *The Mail* on Sunday. "The fear is he will be captured and used as a pawn."

The pilot of the stricken jet had been recovered within 45 minutes of the crash.

The extraction encountered serious complications. Two American transport aircraft became stranded at a remote staging location inside Iran and had to be destroyed by US forces to keep them out of Iranian hands, according to *The New York Times* and *CBS News*. Three additional planes were then deployed to ferry the rescued airman and his escort out of the country.

A regional intelligence official, speaking anonymously, told Associated Press that "a technical malfunction — not enemy fire — had rendered the two planes unusable." Iran's version differed sharply. Iranian military spokesman Ebrahim Zolfaghari declared that the US operation, staged from an abandoned airstrip in southern Isfahan province, had been "completely foiled." He claimed two C-130 transport planes and two Black Hawk helicopters had been destroyed.

The CIA reportedly ran a parallel deception operation to help keep the aviator safe. Trump declared victory on his Truth Social platform on Sunday morning, saying: "WE GOT HIM!" P9

Whole region will burn: Iran

Iran's powerful parliament speaker warned US President Donald Trump on Sunday that his "reckless moves" would mean "our whole region is going to burn". The "only real solution is respecting rights of Iranian people and ending this dangerous game," Mohammad Ghalibaf said.

Iran FM calls up Jaishankar

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi spoke with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar Sunday, amid an escalating rhetoric from Washington. "Received a call from Foreign Minister Araghchi. Discussed present situation," EAM said, marking the sixth conversation since the war began

The wreckage of a downed American jet and two helicopters involved in a rescue of a US Colonel, in Isfahan province | AP

PROPORTIONAL DELIMITATION IS A DEMOGRAPHIC COUP: PINARAYI

PREETHA NAIR @ New Delhi

STRESSING that the upcoming delimitation process requires scrutiny rather than blind acceptance, Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Sunday demanded a constitutional guarantee for states that have successfully stabilised their population. Speaking exclusively to this newspaper, Vijayan said Prime Minister Narendra Modi's assurance that southern states will not lose their current number of seats is a clever play on words that masks injustice.

EXPRESS CLUSIVE

"The core issue facing the Indian Republic is not merely the absolute number of seats a state holds, but its proportional representation and relative political weight within the Union," Vijayan said, responding to Modi's remarks.

During an election rally in Kerala on Saturday, Modi had said that Lok Sabha seats would not be reduced in those Indian states that have successfully controlled population. The PM also said the total number of seats would increase to benefit states across the country.

Calling for consensus, Vijayan said the inter-state seat ratio must be maintained at the 1971 census level until all states achieve population stability.

"Any increase in the total number of seats must be structured so that it does not reduce the relative strength of states that have excelled in human development indicators. A decision of this magnitude cannot be dictated by the Union government. It requires a consensus reached through the Inter-State Council and Parliament, respecting the diversity and the sovereign rights of all constituent states. If the Union government proceeds with a delimitation exercise based solely on current population figures, it effectively punishes states like Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and others that have rigorously implemented national policies on population control and social development," he said. CONTINUED ON P5

PIC: VINCENT PULIKKAL

A decision of this magnitude, which affects the very foundation of our Republic, cannot be dictated by Union govt

Pinarayi Vijayan, Kerala CM

Bengal tribunal asks EC to add candidate's name in voters list

SUBHENDU MAITI @ Kolkata

IN its first verdict, an appellate tribunal in West Bengal on Sunday directed the Election Commission to include the name of Congress candidate in Farakka, Mahtab Sheikh, in the supplementary voter list by the end of the day.

The order of the tribunal headed by the former Calcutta High Court Chief Justice TS Sivagnanam came a day before the April 6 deadline for submitting nomination for the first-phase polls in the state.

Mahtab's trouble started as his name was flagged under the 'logical discrepancy' status in the post-SIR voter list.

His name also did not figure in the supplementary list of voters marked as 'under adjudication' by the ECI.

The Supreme Court had allowed voters excluded voters to move any one of the 19 appellate tribunals being set up in West Bengal to contest the exclusion.

However, the Congress nominee could not move any tribunal because of the delay in setting up of these units and the last date of filing nomination was approaching.

He sought the intervention of the SC, which in turn asked him approach a tribunal. Mahtab then moved the tribunal of Justice Sivagnanam, among the first to be set up, at Bijan Bhaban at Salt Lake.

"My name figures as Mahtab Sheikh in Aadhaar card, passport, driving licence, and son's birth certificate. Despite these proofs, I lost my eligibility as a voter in the supplementary list. Now it is solved," he said.

Mahtab Sheikh | EXPRESS

'Logical discrepancy'

Mahtab was in the 'logical discrepancy' group because of a discrepancy in his as well as his father's names. The tribunal noted that there is no discrepancy in Mahtab's name though his father's name has some inconsistencies

ORDEAL ENDS

Kerala woman trekker traced in Kodagu, survived on water for 4 days

PRAJNA GR @ Madikeri

A woman trekker from Kerala, who had mysteriously gone missing from the Tadiandamol trail in Kodagu, was traced after four days in one of the forest zones of Tadiandamol range on Sunday. Being an experienced trekker, Sharanya, who is 36 years old, survived only on water for four days. She is out of danger and has been shifted to Virajpet Hospital for a general check-up.

Over a hundred people, including personnel from the Anti-Naxal Force, reserve police and forest department and also members of the Adiya and Kudiya tribes were involved in the search operation over the last four days.

Sharanya, who hails from Nadapuram in Kozhikode, went missing on April 2 while trekking in Tadiandamol, the highest peak in Kodagu. She was traced around 5.30 pm on Sunday. Members of the Adiya tribe — Raju, Aiyappa, Subramani and Mani — tracked her inside the sacred grove in Tadiandamol range.

Speaking to the media, Sharanya said that she went without food for three days. "I lost my way while climbing down. I saw a few people when I was climbing down and when I lost them, I took a left. Then I felt that I saw more people, but got lost completely. I tried contacting the forest helpline and my colleague from office, but there were no signals on my phone as there was no network," she added. She explained that she walked till about 6.45 pm on April 2, the day she got lost, and when she found a stream, she decided to rest there. The next day, since the sky was visible, she was on the lookout for drones. On the third day, she got drenched in heavy rain and was cold. She said she was not scared and did not panic, but spent sleepless nights.

Her elder brother Shyam told *The New Indian Express* that Sharanya lost her way after reaching the peak. "She was waiting for someone while getting down, but could not trace back her path," he said.

Virajpet MLA AS Ponnanna, who was at the spot monitoring the search operation, met Sharanya, and she introduced him to the tribes who rescued her. As Ponnanna was announcing that he was forming more teams to search for Sharanya, he got the message that she had been rescued. "She is an experienced trekker. She took shelter at a place where water was available and she slept on the rocks. She was drenched in the rain. Five people from the Adiya tribe rescued her," he explained. He said the forest department will drop Sharanya to her hometown of Nadapuram.

Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre praised Sharanya for her courage. He said surviving in the the forest for four days was a remarkable feat. P5

I lost my way while climbing down. I saw a few people when I was climbing down and when I lost them, I took a left. Then I felt that I saw more people, but got lost completely

— Sharanya, trekker

TIM-TASTIC!

Tim David (70 off 25b) plays a shot to take RCB to 250/3 against CSK, at M Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru on Sunday. RCB won by 43 runs | KEVIN NASHON | P11

EXPRESS READ

Nitish to take oath as RS member on April 10

PATNA: Bihar CM and JDU chief Nitish Kumar will take oath as a Rajya Sabha member on April 10, paving the way for formation of a new government in the state, Bihar BJP president Sanjay Saraogi said on Sunday. P8

'Maha jungleraj' in Bengal': PM attacks Didi

KOLKATA: Attacking the Mamata Banerjee govt in West Bengal, PM Modi said the gherao of seven judicial officers in Malda district was a proof of 'maha jungleraj' of the Trinamool Congress. P8

MINISTRY'S NOD AWAITED

Army pushes ₹250 cr fund to ease risk for defence startups

JAVARIA RANA @ New Delhi

WITH defence startups often unable to move beyond the trial stage, the Army has proposed a ₹250 crore annual Field Exploitation and Capability Acceleration (FECA) fund per Service Headquarters. The proposal is under consideration by the defence ministry.

The proposal, first outlined in February by Army Design Bureau Additional Director General Maj Gen C S Mann, has now been fleshed out.

It aims to create a structured system to test and evaluate new technologies in real conditions, backed by small initial orders to assess performance.

"The idea is to plug gaps by allowing improvements to systems over time, adapting civilian technologies for military use and covering costs during trials and field use, including damage and other expenses that startups currently have to bear on their own," an Army official told this newspaper. A key element of the proposal is risk support, which addresses a major gap in the current system. At present, startups bear the full cost of equipment damaged or expended during trials, including transportation, repairs and modifications.

"There have been many cases where graduates from top institutions invest all their savings to build systems, only to see them fail in high-altitude conditions. Equipment gets damaged, sometimes destroyed, effectively ending a startup's journey," the official said, adding, "Even a single failed trial can set a startup back significantly."

Under the proposed framework, startups and MSMEs will be given a three to four month window to demonstrate their systems. "If a system performs well, it can be taken up for limited field exploitation orders, with the possibility of scaling up to bulk procurement...," the official said.

PM's assurance to South on LS seats aimed at polls: CM

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

KARNATAKA Chief Minister **Siddaramaiah** on Sunday criticised Prime Minister Narendra Modi's statement on not reducing the number of Parliament seats in southern states, alleging "This sudden reassurance for southern states appears less like statesmanship and more like election-driven messaging, timed conveniently with political calculations in states like Kerala and Tamil Nadu."

He posted on X that the issue has never been about the number of Lok Sabha seats of southern states increasing. The concern is about how they increase - and who benefits disproportionately, he said. He stated that while every state may see an increase, the rate and scale of it clearly favours BJP-dominated states. "Uttar Pradesh is expected to go from 80 to 120 seats (plus 40 seats), Maharashtra from 48 to 72 (plus 24), Bihar from 40 to 60 (plus 20), Madhya Pradesh from 29 to 43-44 (plus 15), Rajasthan from 25 to 37-38 (plus 12-13) and Gujarat from 26 to 39 (plus 13)."

He stated, "Southern states see smaller gains. Karnataka rises from 28 to 42 (plus 14), TN from 39 to 58-59 (plus 20), AP from 25 to 37-38 (plus 12-13), Telangana from 17 to 25-26 (plus 8-9) and Kerala from 20 to 30 (plus 10). The numbers are telling. Five southern states together gain barely 63-66 additional seats, while just these seven BJP-dominated states gain about 128-131 seats -- nearly double," he stated. P5

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

BENGALURU

ALMANAC TODAY
• Monday: 06.04.2026 • Year: Parabhava • Ayana: Uttharayana
• Ritu: Vasantha • Masa: Chaitra • Paksha: Krishna • Tithi: Chathurthi 11.42 am
• Nakshatra: Anuradha 12.41 am • Moon in Dhanur Rashi • Rahukaala: 07:30 am to 09:00 am
• Gulikakala: 01:30 pm to 03:00 pm • Yamaganda: 10:30 am to 12:00 pm

WEATHER
MIN 21°C | MAX 34°C
FORECAST
Partly cloudy

Sunrise 06.12 am
Sunset 06.31 pm
Moonrise 10.10 pm
Moonset 08.50 am

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17 months on, city outskirts still await Cauvery water

Pipe laying, testing not yet done; residents pay ₹1.5k for 6,000l tanker

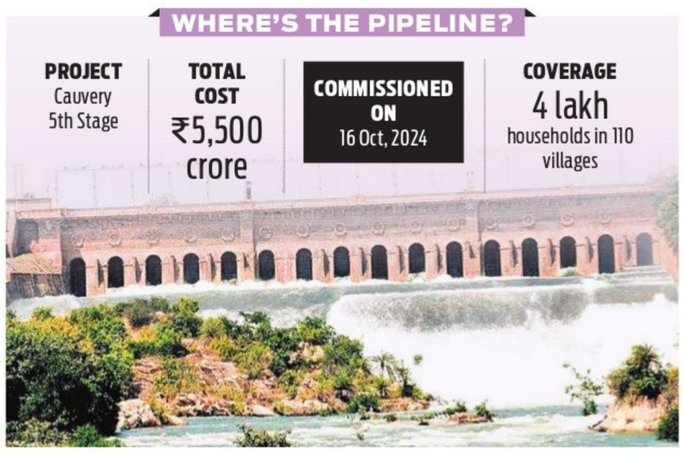
AKNISREE KARTHIK @Bengaluru

EVEN 17 months after the commissioning of the Cauvery fifth stage to supply drinking water to 110 villages on the periphery of Bengaluru, many villages are still waiting for Cauvery.

While the government claims that the water is supplied to 100 out of the 110 villages, residents say otherwise and worry that they have to go without Cauvery water this summer too.

When a question was raised by MLA Suresh Kumar on the status of water supply to all these villages during the Assembly session, which got over recently, Deputy Chief Minister and Bengaluru Development Minister DK Shivakumar said that water supply is delayed in only 10 villages. In the Mahadevapura zone, these are Varthur, Balagere, Sorahunase, Gunjur, and Panathur. In the Byatarayanapura zone, they are Kattigenahalli, Srinivasapura, Bellahalli, Thirumenahalli, and Chokkanahalli.

Speaking to *TNIE*, civic activist and co-founder of Varthur Rising, Jagadisha Reddy said, "Government's claim that the works of supplying Cauvery water in 100 out of 110 villages are completed is far from the truth. Water pipe laying, testing, and laying of underground sewer are not completed in many villages."



Residents said that they are relying on borewells and private tankers, which charge anything above Rs 1,500 for a 6,000-litre tanker. In areas where there is 'Sanchari Cauvery', residents are booking it and getting water at Rs 1,300 for 12,000 litres.

Reddy said every individual needs around 100 litres of water daily, and a family of five have to book one tanker every week. "As the demand increases for private tankers in summer, the rates will be hiked, and residents end up spending nearly Rs 10,000 on water," he said. In villages where there is a Cauvery water supply, residents are not willing to take the connection, as they have to pay a hefty amount for the connection.

DCM said that the delay in the Cauvery water supply to villages in Mahadevapura was due to the ongoing elevated corridor works and road-widening works where Karnataka Road Development Corporation Limited (KRDCL) is widening the 60-feet road from the Varthur new flyover to the police station to 100-feet. He said that water supply pipes have been laid in the villages falling under Byatarayanapura, and they are awaiting the completion of the ground-level reservoir (GLR) at Chokkanahalli. He said that there was an issue related to the GLR land, which was settled in the court last year, and that work was going on.

BWSSB said that 'Cauvery Connection Centre' has been set up in the 10 villages.

WEST ASIA CRISIS

IndianOil boosts auto LPG supply in K'taka

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

INDIAN Oil Corporation Ltd (IOCL) has increased Auto LPG supplies across Karnataka in response to a sharp rise in demand triggered by ongoing geopolitical disruptions, the company said on Sunday.

According to the company, oil marketing companies (OMCs) operate 72 auto LPG dispensing stations (ALDS) in the state, of which Indian Oil runs 55 outlets. Though over 300 private ALDS exist, nearly 80% have become non-operational, leading to supply constraints. The company noted that limited infrastructure and dispensing capacity continue to affect availability. Price differences have also shifted demand, with PSU outlets selling Auto LPG at Rs 89.52 per litre in Bengaluru, compared to Rs 99 to Rs 105 at private stations, resulting in longer queues, it added.

With nearly 70% of autorickshaws in the state equipped for dual fuel, Indian Oil has advised users to temporarily switch to petrol where necessary.

Auto drivers plan a protest over financial distress

Autorickshaw associations in Bengaluru plan to protest against auto LPG supply crunch, alleging government neglect and severe financial distress affecting their livelihoods.

M Manjunath, president, Adarsha Auto and Taxi Drivers' Union, said auto drivers are struggling because of declining incomes and irregular fuel availability. He alleged that concerns raised with the Transport Department and other authorities have not been adequately addressed.

He said that many drivers are unable to pay EMIs, while also facing difficulties in paying house rent and children's school fees. The associations demanded that the state government give a minimum assured supply of six litres of LPG per auto daily. Bengaluru's daily Auto LPG demand is about 300 tonnes. The unions have sought government support for conversion to CNG and plan to submit a memorandum to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah.

LPG OUTPUT SURGES

Month	Daily supply
February	43.5 MT
March	59.53 MT
April	68.53 MT (projected)

Many drivers are unable to pay EMIs, while also facing difficulties in paying house rent and children's school fees. Govt should min six litres of LPG per auto daily

—M Manjunath, president, Adarsha Auto and Taxi Drivers' Union

Autorickshaws queue up for LPG at a station amid a supply crisis in Bengaluru on Sunday | SHASHIDHAR BYRAPPA

Animal shelters cut down on feeding

ANUBHAB ROY @Bengaluru

THE LPG cylinder shortages due to the US-Israel-Iran war now haunt the Bengaluru animal shelters, which rely on cylinders to cook daily food, making it difficult to feed the rescued animals.

Located on Kanakapura Main Road, We Save Animals (WSA) Welfare Trust is one of the worst hit. "Due to a severe shortage of LPG and firewood, we are facing extreme difficulty in preparing food," said Apoorva KN, a founding trustee at WSA. WSA currently houses 170 dogs, 35 cats, nine cows, two goats, and a horse. "One cylinder lasts for two days.

The dogs require cooked food, and cannot be fed raw meat or rice," said Apoorva. The trust is trying to source firewood, and is urging for public donations of LPGs to meet the demand. Eager volunteers or donors can reach out to her at 8861261346. "We are facing a serious LPG shortage. Cooking food for more than 300 animals, all under treatment, becomes difficult. Food is a part of their recovery. We are using firewood, but the process is slow, exhausting, and takes away time," expressed the founder of Friends For Animal Trust, Vikash A Bafna.

According to Nevina Kamath, a member of the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) Bengaluru, the vendor that provides her food to feed street dogs daily has been facing difficulties for the past two weeks.

The only shelters that have managed to circumvent this shortage are shelters that are not reliant on LPG, or are only partially reliant, if at all. Sudha Narayanan, founder at Charlie's Animal Rescue Centre (CARE), said, "We cook hundreds of kilograms of food per day to feed over 300 dogs at our place and street dogs in other neighbourhoods. But, one-and-a-half years ago, we switched to a firewood-powered system. The switch took us about 10 days. I can't imagine how we'd cope if we hadn't switched."

Ensure at least 10km of weekly cleaning: Cholan

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

A special cleanliness drive was carried out on Sunday across Bengaluru Central City Corporation (BCCC) limits. The drive covered a total stretch of 4.05 km, and 32 loads of roadside waste were cleared. Additionally, 7 identified black spots were eliminated. Commissioner Rajendra Cholan directed officials to ensure at least 10 km of weekly community cleaning.

Cholan stated that locations where garbage tends to accumulate are being identified and cleared on a continuous basis across different zones. "In addition to regular cleaning activities, special operations are planned and implemented. The city corporation is giving high priority to permanently eliminating identified black spot areas", he said.

He appealed to the public not to litter on roadsides or in public places and to dispose of waste only at designated locations to help maintain city cleanliness.

STANDS FOR LEGENDS

Former cricketing legends Rahul Dravid and Anil Kumble unveil two stands named after them at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru ahead of the RCB-CSK IPL match . KSCA president Venkatesh Prasad is also seen | KEVIN NASHON

5 NEW GATI SHAKTI CARGO TERMINALS APPROVED FOR B'LURU RAIL DIVISION

BENGALURU: The Bengaluru Division of South Western Railway is set to get five new Gati Shakti Cargo Terminals (GCTs), with the Union government granting in-principle approvals under the PM Gati Shakti initiative, the Ministry of Railways has informed Parliament. In a written reply in the Lok Sabha to an unstarred question from Bengaluru South MP Tejasvi Surya, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said the proposed terminals will come up at three locations in Devanagonthi, and at Oddarahalli and Doddabele. The projects are part of a broader push to strengthen rail-based freight infrastructure through private investment. The Gati Shakti Cargo Terminal policy enables private players to develop and operate cargo handling facilities on railway land. Once final approvals are granted, operators are expected to complete construction within 24 months, although timelines may vary depending on land acquisition and statutory clearances. The ministry noted that two such terminals have already been commissioned in the Bengaluru Division, at Sivadi and Oddarahalli. In-principle approvals have been granted for 292 additional locations nationwide, taking the total to 128 operational GCTs. The reply also stated that a Vande Bharat sleeper train maintenance depot has been sanctioned at Thanisandra in Bengaluru at a cost of Rs 339.7 crore. The facility, comprising three inspection bay lines with a covered shed, is currently under development. **ENS**

Hosur Rd bad, says Shaw; NHAI cites traffic pressure

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

BIOTECH pioneer **Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw**, in a post on X on Sunday, raised concerns over the condition of NH44 (Hosur Road) stretch in Bengaluru, describing it as "shoddily designed and ill-maintained".

Calling the key IT corridor an "eyesore", she pointed to damaged medians and barricades, and un-asphalted shoulders, questioning the credibility of the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) and its claims of robust road infrastructure.

The Hosur Road stretch serves as a crucial arterial route connecting Bengaluru to industrial hubs and the IT cluster around Electronics City. It witnesses heavy traffic, including office commuters, commercial vehicles and intercity transit.

Responding to the criticism, NHAI said the corridor was planned in 2005 and completed in 2010, and has since undergone significant stress due to rapid urban and industrial expansion in the surrounding areas. According to the authority, the carriageway is presently in good condition and free from potholes.

The authority also noted that the stretch now falls under multiple jurisdictions, including local bodies such as Hebbagodi, Chandapura and Attibele, which adds to coordination and maintenance challenges.

The highway currently handles over one lakh commuters. It maintained that regular maintenance is being carried out by the concessionaire, and that periodic renewal works, including resurfacing and overlay, were completed in April 2025.However, NHAI said it has proposed four vehicular overpasses (VOPs). One of these is planned at Veerasandra near Biocon, a key junction that often witnesses bottlenecks. Work is currently under way at three of the proposed locations.

Complete census enumeration: Central corpn chief to citizens

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

BENGALURU Central City Corporation (BCCC) Commissioner Rajendra Cholan took up the Self Census-2027 process by submitting his details online on Saturday. He appealed to citizens to take part in the Self Census.

"For the first time, Census of India 2027 is being conducted in digital format. Citizens within the jurisdiction of BCCC can complete the self-enumeration process easily in a simple digital format, using a mobile phone or computer through the web portal https://se.census.gov.in between April 1 and April 15," Cholan said, adding that the process can be completed within 10-15 minutes.

"Citizens are requested to actively participate in the self-enumeration process and contribute towards improving housing, infrastructure and public services in Bengaluru city," he said.

Officials, staff must collaborate

Cholan, who held a meeting regarding Census-2027 here on Sunday, said preparations are under way to train enumerators at centres across assembly constituencies. He said teams of 10 supervisory officers are formed under revenue officers for each training centre.

The meeting was attended by charge officers, additional charge officers, technical assistants, executive engineers, assistant executive engineers, revenue officers, assistant revenue officers, assessors, revenue inspectors, revenue supervisors, data entry operators, and other staff appointed for census duties.

Horoscopes By Holiday

HOLIDAY MATHIS

06th April : Shoot for the Moon The Sagittarius moon aims the arrow toward adventure with lunar trines to Neptune and Saturn, lit by Aries fire. Ideas travel faster under this sky. Plans that once felt theoretical suddenly have wings. Adventure begins with a question and ends with so many more questions, but try to follow the first one through. It just may zip open the world.

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr. 20)
You're attracted to what's interesting, and what's interesting is attracted to you. So there's no work to be done. Magnets don't have to work to come together. Their nature does all the pulling.

TAURUS (Apr. 20 - May 20)
You're coming into your own. People are listening more closely, asking your opinion and letting you call more of the shots that matter. Money may be involved, though money itself isn't power. How it's used is what counts.

GEMINI (May 21 - June 21)
Don't be too quick to get involved today. The issues are far more complex than they look. If you get in too deep today, it may be difficult to back out gracefully. Instead of jumping in, just dip in a toe.

CANCER (June 22 - July 22)
Your hard work doesn't seem to be getting you there fast enough. Try narrowing your focus. This will help you see the result clearly, at least in one area, which will inspire and motivate you to continue the mission.

LEO (July 23 - Aug. 22)
You've come to a fork in the road. Gather as much information as you can. If possible, call someone who's been here before. Once you pick a direction, its reversal, though not impossible, will be awkward and time-consuming.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 - Sept. 22)
When you think about the people you enjoy being around, you rank pretty high on the list -- as it should be. Your kind of fun is very specific and satisfying to you. Today, it involves thinking deeply or working hard.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 - Oct. 23)
It's OK not to understand everything right away. Let experience marinate. It's better when the information assimilates in its own time and gels when it has relevance to your current life. It all clicks when you're ready to do something about it.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24 - Nov. 21)
It seems you can't proceed before certain conditions are met, but this is a lie that grows from the fear of getting started. Truly, you can start from exactly where you are. Action will call the missing pieces into place.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 - Dec. 21)
What worked beautifully a few weeks ago isn't delivering the same results now. Has the situation really changed that much? In a word: yes. Conditions have shifted. Update your approach while the adjustment is still simple.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 - Jan. 19)
If you haven't decided your financial plan, someone else will decide for you. You're being constantly marketed to. It's a time to get specific about what you actually value and what will make your life feel rich.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 - Feb. 18)
Every relationship has a story. Each story is a point of view. Perhaps the way you're seeing a relationship isn't helping you feel powerful within it. The truth can be seen in many ways -- painted in light brushstrokes or heavy ones.

PISCES (Feb. 19 - Mar 20)
A kindness you gave long ago boomerangs back in a slightly different form -- a reminder of all you do, much of it unconsciously, just being yourself in the world. Every move matters at least a little, and some quite a lot.

Solutions to Saturday's puzzle

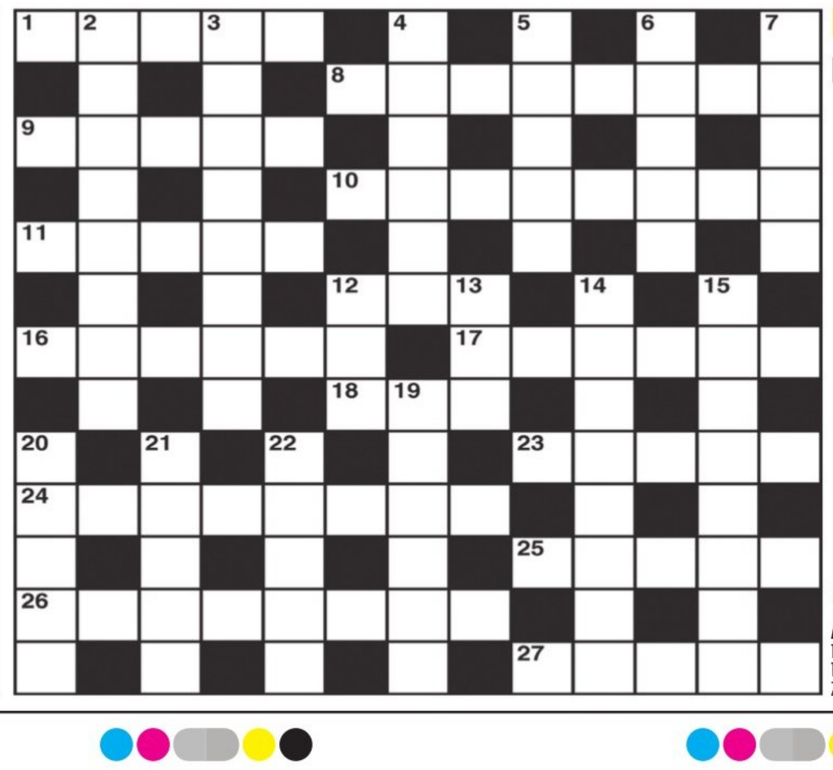
1			5					
5	6		8		7	2		
	7	4				8		
					6		3	
	2			7			1	
	1		4					
		1				3	6	
		6	3		1		5	8
					4			7

5	7	4	1	3	6	2	8	9
6	8	9	2	4	7	1	3	5
1	2	3	5	9	8	6	7	4
9	5	2	6	7	3	8	4	1
8	3	7	4	1	2	9	5	6
4	1	6	8	5	9	7	2	3
2	4	5	7	6	1	3	9	8
3	6	8	9	2	5	4	1	7
7	9	1	3	8	4	5	6	2

SUDOKU HARD

TEST YOUR NUMBER CRUNCHING SKILL WITH OUR UNIQUE PUZZLE

Fill in the grid with digits in such a manner that every row, every column and every 3X3 box accommodates the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.



CROSS WORD

ACROSS
1 A treatise closely followed by speech (5)
8 Piano piece - a very small one (8)
9 Weapon for general about 50 (5)
10 Marine creature has first to mutate (8)
11 Tramp seen in a group of trees (5)
12 Mother's retired uncle in America (3)
16 Squirm like a man after a summons? (6)
17 British sailors occupy a border town in Holland (6)
18 A footnote about a creeper (3)
23 Get up about mid-morning and wash (5)
24 Wild pig in its own fat calls for old port (8)
25 Most important eastern state (5)
26 Potential pile boss may make (8)
27 Instrument adds nothing to a little room (5)

DOWN
2 Rare lily found broken in the chaff (8)
3 Great misfortune for Jane? (8)
4 Girl to ruin fancy hat (6)
5 Rear to be tough (5)
6 Bill free of bitterness? (5)
7 I held out to obtain capital (5)
12 Deep container of salt (3)
13 It directs a politician to go outside (3)
14 Pass on information that's personal (8)
15 Own no pearls perhaps (8)
19 Quiet little brook that's high-pitched and piercing (6)
20 Dropped off spelt incorrectly (5)
21 Get over being angry (5)
22 He requires fifty in hard cash (5)

SATURDAY'S SOLUTIONS

Across: 1 Capricious, 6 Roll, 10 Ideal, 11 Unsparing, 12 Semolina, 13 Treat, 15 Cocaine, 17 Tornado, 19 Dessert, 21 Genesis, 22 Moral, 24 Ennobled, 27 Cold sober, 28 Naive, 29 Leda, 30 Well played.

Down: 1 Chip, 2 Pretences, 3 Igloo, 4 Inutile, 5 Upstart, 7 Olive, 8 Lighthouse, 9 Cast-iron, 14 Academical, 16 Idealist, 18 Austerity, 20 Tremble, 21 General, 23 Ruled, 25 Banal, 26 Lead.

JUMBLE

UNSCRAMBLE THESE JUMBLES, ONE LETTER TO EACH SQUARE, TO FORM FOUR ORDINARY WORDS.

BY DAVID L. HOYT AND JEFF KNUREK

CGAOR

AHNEV

LYWOLE

DISEBE

It's so great we can see all the skating events this afternoon.
I know! And it's really not that cold in here.
THE FANS WATCHING THE OLYMPIC FIGURE SKATING COMPETITION WERE HAVING ---
Get the free JUST JUMBLE app • Follow us on Facebook

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Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer here: ( ) " ( ) ( ) ( ) "

(Answers tomorrow)

Saturday's Jumbles: ANNOY LOOPY MUTTER ODDITY
Answer: After loading his saw, hammer, etc. into his truck, the carpenter decided to — TOOL AROUND

Two youths, Kishore and Girish, drowned while attempting to swim in Ramasamudra Lake in the Dibbur Halli police limits in Sidlaghatta taluk, Chikkaballapur district. Both were residents of Bengaluru. They were in Gajajianahalli to attend a festival

Belagavi man arrested for locking up wife, kids; victims rescued

Action initiated by Akka Pade after police receive info via a phone call from Delhi

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Belagavi

IN a commendable operation, Belagavi city police rescued a woman who was allegedly confined and subjected to physical and mental abuse by her husband at Tilakwadi in the city.

The action was initiated after police received information through a phone call from Delhi stating that the woman had been locked inside a bedroom and was being harassed. Acting immediately, senior officials directed the Women Police Station to take necessary steps. The Akka Pade(squad), a special women's safety unit, was deployed to deal with the situation.

Upon reaching the location, the team forced open the door and safely rescued the woman along with her two children. They were provided immediate medical care, protection, and temporary shelter. Based on the victim's complaint, a case was registered against her husband at the women police station, and he has been taken into custody for further investigation.

The women police squad from 'Akka Pade' create awareness among women about their rights and laws for their protection | EXPRESS

To ensure her safety, the rescued woman and her children were later sent to her parents home in Delhi by flight.

The operation was carried out by PSI A Rukmini, along with staff members RI Kadalagi, Swapna Gondali, Roopashree Yamakanamaradi, and Siddappa Sangli, whose efforts have been widely appreciated.

Since its launch on February 17, 2026, the Akka Squad in Belagavi has been actively working towards women's safety. The team has conducted awareness programmes in over 70 schools, colleges, bus stands, railway stations, hostels, and other public places, reaching out through 91 awareness initiatives. These programmes covered laws related to women, child marriage prohibition, POCSO Act, cybercrime awareness, and personal safety.

The squad has so far rescued two women, intervened in eight domestic disputes, and handled 12 incidents. Additionally, 55 cases have been registered under the Karnataka Police Act, 1963, related to harassment, stalking, public nuisance, and indecent behaviour. Police Commissioner Bhushan Borase stated that the Akka Squad remains committed to ensuring the safety of women and children across Belagavi city.

HOLY BLESSINGS

Children celebrate Easter with chocolates and eggs after prayers at St Andrew's Church in Bengaluru on Sunday | SHASHIDHAR BYRAPPA

Biker mows down two labourers; bus driver, NHAI too booked

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

TWO men were killed after a speeding motorbike crashed into them while they were crossing the Bengaluru–Ballari main road near Vidyashilp Cross in Yelahanka traffic police limits on Sunday. A case has been registered against the bike rider, a private bus driver, and National Highways Authority of India for negligence.

The deceased, Shanthappa (35) and Siddharth (19), were residents of Allalasandra and hailed from Kalaburagi district. Both construction labourers, they had arrived in the city around 5.45 am from Hyderabad by a private bus, which had stopped near Vidyashilp Cross. Soon after they got down from the bus and were crossing the road, they were knocked down by the biker. They both suffered severed head injuries and died on the spot. The biker, who sustained injuries, is being treated at a hospital.

Along with a case against the biker, the police also booked the private bus driver for stopping the bus on the highway without a designated stop and allowing passengers to get down. Additionally, a negligence case is registered against the concerned officials of National Highway-44 for leaving the iron grill barricade open without ensuring pedestrian safety on the Bengaluru-Ballari highway.

Hoax bomb threat disrupts Delhi-bound flight at KIA

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

PASSENGERS on an IndiGo flight heading to Delhi from Bengaluru were evacuated at Kempegowda International Airport after a passenger found a bomb threat note in the aircraft lavatory on Saturday evening. The incident caused panic among passengers, and after a thorough search by airport officials, the threat was later declared to be a hoax.

The jurisdictional Bengaluru International Airport police said that an on board passenger using the lavatory found a piece of tissue paper with a message indicating the presence of explosives on the flight. The passenger immediately alerted the cabin crew, who informed the pilot. The pilot then alerted air traffic control (ATC). , following which all the passengers on board were evacuated. Airport Security officials including bomb detection squad conducted a thorough check of the aircraft. As no explosives or suspicious items were found, officials declared the threat a hoax. The flight later departed for Delhi. A case has been registered at the police station, and further investigation is underway.

Photo for representation only

Rave party busted in Kollegal

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Mysuru

16 people were arrested from a farmhouse near Madhuvana village in Kollegal taluk for holding a rave party. The party, organised to celebrate the birthday Zaheer Khan alias Khalu, a rowdy-sheeter in Bengaluru, was held at a farmhouse belonging to contractor Fayaz Khan.

Police arrested 16 persons, including Zaheer Khan and recovered narcotic drugs and seized vehicles. One person is said to be absconding.

The arrested include the prime accused Zaheer Khan, Umair Khan, Sheikh Mohammed, Nisar Khan, Syed Yunus, Sadrullah, Illiyas Khan, Shapruddin, Pavan, Sadiq, Ajmal Baig, Mohammed Shakeel, Kumaraswamy, Naveen Raj and others.

Driver hangs self in seized truck

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

A 26-year-old truck driver ended his life by hanging inside the truck near JP Nagar traffic police station on Saturday night. Earlier in the night, he had been caught for driving under the influence of alcohol and his truck had been seized. Fearing legal consequences, he might have ended his life under the influence of alcohol, the police suspected. The deceased, Shanmuga (26), hailed from Tamil Nadu.

Shanmuga was intercepted by the JP Nagar traffic police during a routine drunk-and-drive check on Outer Ring Road near JP Nagar around 11.15pm. He was driving a Tamil Nadu-registered truck loaded with goods. His breathalyser test came positive for drunk driving, the vehicle was seized, and a notice was issued to him. After seizure, the truck was parked on the main road near the JP Nagar traffic police station. Later at night, he might have hanged himself from a hook on the truck top, using a rope. People moving about saw his body on Sunday morning and alerted the police, who rushed to the spot and shifted the body for postmortem.

The police suspect that he might taken his life distressed over the incident and fearing reprimand from his employer. Based on a complaint, a case of unnatural death was registered.

HELPLINE:

If you are having suicidal thoughts, or are worried about a friend or need emotional support, someone is always there to listen. Call Sneha Foundation - 04424640050, Tele Manas - 14416 (available 24x7) or iCall, the Tata Institute of Social Sciences' helpline - 02225521111

EXPRESS READ

Businessman held for blackmailing woman Customs officer

BENGALURU: M Kripalani, an electronics store businessman in Bengaluru, was arrested for allegedly sexually assaulting and threatening a woman Customs officer using her private photos. Kripalani had met the victim eight years ago and had allegedly promised to marry her. A complaint was filed at Yelahanka police station, later transferred to Indiranagar police station. Kripalani had allegedly also used the victim in his business operations to evade Customs duties. **ENS**

Tribunal rejects L&T plea, KRIDE encashes Rs 57cr bank guarantees

BENGALURU: Rail Infrastructure Development Company (Karnataka) Limited (KRIDE) has invoked and encashed performance bank guarantees worth Rs 57 crore issued on behalf of Larsen & Toubro (L&T), following an arbitration tribunal ruling in its favour over disputes related to suburban rail project corridors. The guarantees, issued by YES Bank for Corridor 2 and Corridor 4 of the Bengaluru Suburban Rail Project, were encashed after the tribunal rejected L&T's plea seeking to restrain their invocation. **ENS**

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform to the General Public that my client **SRI. MURALI .P** Son of Sri. Peddappa is sole and absolute owner of immovable property mentioned in the Schedule hereunder and he has agreed to sell the Schedule property in favour of one **SRI. PAVAN KUMAR BAJENTHRI,** Son of Sri. Bhimappa.

Any person having any right, title, interest or claim in the Schedule property or having any objections to the proposed transaction may do so in writing with documentary proof to the undersigned within **THIRTY DAYS** from the date of this publication, failing which my client will proceed to sell the schedule property. Thereafter no further claim will be entertained or the same will be deemed to have been waived.

SCHEDULE

All that piece and parcel of immovable property **bearing Site No.07,** Khatha No.68/1 formed in property Sy.No. 68/1 situated at Nagashettihalli Village, Kasaba Hobli, Bengaluru North Taluk, presently property comes under the limits of Bruhath Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike, bearing EPID No. 6925090233 together with House building constructed thereon.

MEASURING :

East to West : 30 Feet;
North to South : 45 Feet;
Totally measuring : 1,350 Sq.Feet

AND BOUNDED ON :

East by : Site No.08; West by : Site No.06; North by : 30 Feet Road; South by : Property of Sri. Narasima Murthy.

SRI. M.V. THIMME GOWDA, Advocate
No. 4/10, Amara Building, 1st Main Road, Yeswanthpur, BENGALURU - 560 022.
Mob. : 9844712545
BENGALURU, DATE: 04.04.2026

IN THE COURT OF THE HON'BLE XX ADDL CITY CIVIL AND SESSIONS JUDGE AT BENGALURU (CCH-32)

P & SC. No. 81/2026

BETWEEN: Smt. Maya .R Nayak, W/o. Late Ramakrishna Pangal Nayak, Aged about 86 years, Represented by its GPA Holder, Smt. Vidya Nayak, W/o. S Vasudev Murthy, Aged about 62 years, Both are residing at No. 565 5th Main Opp Water Tank Narayana Nagar 2nd Block, Doddakallasandra, Bengaluru-560062 ...PETITIONER

AND: NIL ...RESPONDENT

PUBLIC NOTICE

Where is the named has made petition to this court under section 371 & 372 of Indian succession act for the Grand of succession certificate in favour of the petitioner Maya R Nayak is a senior citizen and due to her age and health, she has authorised her daughter Smt. Vidya Nayak as her General Power of Attorney holder, in respect of schedule mention below has held by Smt. P Nirupama Nayak expired On 30/04/2014 and Smt. P Bharathi Nayak expired on 18/09/2018 who are the sister in law of Maya R Nayak. Interested parties her hereby called upon to appear before this court in person or by pleader duly instructed on **22-04-2026** at 11:00 A.M inform to show cost against the petitioner failing wearing the parents will be heard and declared as ex party.

SCHEDULE

Item No.1: Name of the account holder: P Bharathi Nayak Savings Bank Account No. 1147101011133 maintained at Canara Bank, Banashankari II Stage Branch, Bengaluru-560070, IFSC: CNRB0001147, PPF Account number : 0096000002

Item No.2: Name of the account holder: P Nirupama Nayak Locker No. 123001488086 availed at Canara Bank, Banashankari II Stage Branch, Bengaluru-560070 Savings Bank Account No. 1147101011083 IFSC: CNRB0001147

Given under my hand and the seal of this court on 03-03-2026.

By order of the court, Senior Sheristedar, City Civil Court at bangalore.

Mr. SILAS .S,
Mr. MOHAMMED MOIN ULLA, Advocates
Having office at SMS Law Firm, No.94, 2nd floor, 2nd Main, Balaji Layout, Bengaluru-560061.

ಬ ಬಳ್ಳಾರಿ ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಸಹಕಾರ ಕೇಂದ್ರ ಬ್ಯಾಂಕ್ ನಿ., ಹೊಸಪೇಟೆ

ಪಿ.ಜಿ. ನಂ.17, ಹೊಸಪೇಟೆ-583201.
ದೂರವಾಣಿ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: 91872 35482
E-mail: ceo@bellarydcc.bank.in Web-Site: www.bellarydcc.bank.in

ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: ಆಶಿವಿ/ಸಿಬ್ಬಂದಿ/ನೇಮಕಾತಿ/ 12 /2026-27 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 06.04.2026

: ನೇಮಕಾತಿ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ :

ಬಳ್ಳಾರಿ ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಸಹಕಾರ ಕೇಂದ್ರ ಬ್ಯಾಂಕ್ ನಿ., ಹೊಸಪೇಟೆ ಇದರಲ್ಲಿ ಖಾಲಿ ಇರುವ ಈ ಕೆಳಕಂಡ ಹುದ್ದೆಗಳ ನೇರ ನೇಮಕಾತಿಗಾಗಿ ಅರ್ಹ ಅಭ್ಯರ್ಥಿಗಳಿಂದ ಅರ್ಜಿಗಳನ್ನು ಅನ್‌ಲೈನ್ (Online) ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಅರ್ಜಿಗಳನ್ನು ಖುದ್ದಾಗಿ ಕೋರಿಯರ್ ಅಥವಾ ಅಂಚೆ ಮೂಲಕ ಪ್ರತ್ಯೇಕವಾಗಿ ಕಳುಹಿಸಲು ಅವಕಾಶವಿಲ್ಲವೆಂದು ಈ ಮೂಲಕ ಸ್ಪಷ್ಟಪಡಿಸಿದೆ. ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ ಸಹಕಾರ ಇಲಾಖೆಯ ಮಾನ್ಯ ಸಹಕಾರ ಸಂಘಗಳ ಅಪರ ನಿಬಂಧಕರ (ಪತ್ತು) ಇವರ ಆದೇಶ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ:ಕ್ರ.ಸಂ:ಆರ್.ಸಿ.ಎಸ್/ಸಿಆರ್‌ಡಿ/ಸಿಎಚಿ-5(ಡಿಸಿಸಿಬಿ)/3/2026 ಸಿ.ಆರ್.ಡಿ.1 ದಿನಾಂಕ 31.01.2026 ರನ್ವಯ ಹಾಗೂ ಸರ್ಕಾರದ ಆದೇಶ ಸಂ:ಸಿಅಸುಇ01ಸೆಹಿಮ 2026, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ದಿನಾಂಕ 27.02.2026 ರನ್ವಯ ನೇಮಕಾತಿ ಮಾಡಲು ಉದ್ದೇಶಿಸಿರುವ ವಿವಿಧ ವೃಂದದ ಒಟ್ಟು 82 ಹುದ್ದೆಗಳನ್ನು ಈ ಕೆಳಕಂಡಂತೆ ವರ್ಗೀಕರಿಸಿ ಮೀಸಲಿರಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ಕ್ರ ಸಂ	ಹುದ್ದೆಯ ವಿವರ	ವೇತನ ಶ್ರೇಣಿ	ನೇಮಕಾತಿ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳಬೇಕಾದ ಹುದ್ದೆಗಳ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ
1	ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥಾಪಕರು/ಪ್ರಥಮ ದರ್ಜೆ ಸಹಾಯಕರು	ರೂ. 44425-83700.	22
2	ದ್ವಿತೀಯ ದರ್ಜೆ ಸಹಾಯಕರು	ರೂ. 34100-67400.	28
3	ವಾಹನ ಚಾಲಕರು	ರೂ. 31775-61300.	01
4	ಕಿರಿಯ ಸೇವಕರು	ರೂ. 29600-52800.	31
		ಒಟ್ಟು	82

ಅರ್ಜಿ ಸಮೂಹ / ಸಲ್ಲಕೆ / ಮೀಸಲಾತಿ ವರ್ಗೀಕರಣ / ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸ್ಥಳೀಯ / ಸ್ಥಳೀಯೇತರ ಮೀಸಲಾತಿ / ಒಳ ಮೀಸಲಾತಿ / ವಯೋಮಿತಿ / ವಿದ್ಯಾರ್ಹತೆ / ಅರ್ಜಿ ಶುಲ್ಕ / ಅಂಚೆ ವಿಧಾನ / ಅಜಿತ ಪರೀಕ್ಷೆ / ಅಗತ್ಯಸಬೇಕಾದ ಪ್ರಮಾಣ ಪತ್ರಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ಸೂಚನೆ/ ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ ವಿವರಗಳನ್ನು ಬ್ಯಾಂಕಿನ Web-Site: www.bellarydcc.bank.in ನಲ್ಲಿ ಲಭ್ಯವಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ಅರ್ಜಿ ಅಭ್ಯರ್ಥಿಗಳು ಆನ್‌ಲೈನ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಅರ್ಜಿ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ.

ಅರ್ಜಿ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಪ್ರಾರಂಭ ದಿನಾಂಕ : 06.04.2026
ಅರ್ಜಿ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ : 06.05.2026

ಸಹಿ : ಸಂಚಾಲಕ ಸದಸ್ಯರು, ಸಿಬ್ಬಂದಿ ನೇಮಕಾತಿ ಸಮಿತಿ, ಹಾಗೂ ಮುಖ್ಯ ಕಾರ್ಯನಿರ್ವಾಹಣಾಧಿಕಾರಿ ಬಿ.ಡಿ.ಸಿ.ಸಿ. ಬ್ಯಾಂಕ್ ನಿ., ಹೊಸಪೇಟೆ.

ಸಹಿ : ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷರು, ಸಿಬ್ಬಂದಿ ನೇಮಕಾತಿ ಸಮಿತಿ, ಹಾಗೂ ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷರು ಬಿ.ಡಿ.ಸಿ.ಸಿ. ಬ್ಯಾಂಕ್ ನಿ., ಹೊಸಪೇಟೆ.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The general public is hereby informed that my client, **Sri. M. Murthy,** residing at No. 115, Dooravani Village, Kotturu, Opposite CCM Church, Vijinapura, Ambedkar Nagar, Bangalore – 560016, has lost the original Hakku Patra dated 30-06-1976, issued by the Tahsildar, Bangalore South Taluk, in favour of Sri. Arumugam, the previous owner of the property.

The said document pertains to the property bearing No. 37, Khatha No. 24, BBMP Khatha No. 217, measuring East to West 17 feet and North to South 40 feet, totally measuring 680 sq. ft., situated at Chikkabasavanapura Village, K.R. Puram Hobli, Bangalore East Taluk.

The above-mentioned original document was lost while my client was travelling to Jayanagar. In this regard, my client has lodged a police complaint on 28-03-2026, vide Lost Report No. 2128757/2026.

Any person who finds or is in possession of the said original document is hereby requested to contact the undersigned within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which appropriate legal action will be initiated.

Place : Bangalore **Date :** 5-04-2026
P.S. Poornima
Advocate & Solicitor
No. 471, Legal Access, 8th B Main, Jayanagar 4th Block, Bangalore – 560011
Mobile: 9902755041
legalaccess.poornima@gmail.com

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client is intending to purchase the Schedule property from the owners (a) Thopamma, W/o Late Muniyappa, aged about 71 years, residing at Singahalli Bangalore North-562129 and (b) Padma D/o Late Muniyappa aged about 53 years residing at Singahalli Bangalore North-562129.

Apart from the said owners if any other person/s have any manner of right, title and or interest or demand or claim or charge or lien over the schedule property, they are hereby requested to file their objections to this sale transaction, in writing along with the photocopies of the document on which they are basing their claim, with the undersigned within 10 days from the date of publication of this notice. Objection/s filed thereafter will not be binding on my client and my client will proceed to purchase the schedule property as if there are not claimants/objections.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that pieces and parcel of the agricultural property bearing Survey number 74/2 measuring to an extent of 0-10 (Ten) guntas situated at Singahalli village, Jala Hobli, Yelahanka Taluk, Bengaluru Urban District, and bounded on the:- East By: Ramanna's Land, West By: Dasenahalli Gopallappa Land, North By: Sy No.74/1 earlier belonging to Muniyappa Now Belonging to Murji M Patel and Jadeja, Krishnadevasinh, South By: Sy.No. 74/3, Belonging to T Venkataswamy and H.S.Prakash

Mohumed Sadiqh B.A
KV Legal, Advocates & Legal Consultants
No.FF47, 1st Floor, Gold Tower, No.50, Residency Road, Bangalore 560 025
sadiq@kvlegal.com
Mob: 9448557169, 9482083786
Bangalore, Dated: 05.04.2026

ANDHRA PRADESH CAPITAL REGION DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Rayapudi, Thullur (M), Amaravati Capital City, Guntur (Dt) – 522237 (A.P.)

E Procurement Tender Notice

APCRDA invites tenders for the following works for which the bids can be downloaded on AP e-procurement portal from **06.04.2026 to 20.04.2026 upto 14:00 Hrs.** Due date for submission of Bid **20.04.2026 up to 15.00 Hrs,** Technical bid opening **20.04.2026 @16.00Hrs.**

NIT No.	Name of work	Estimate Cost
01/MAU61-USI0TT(OTH)/12/2026-HB	Providing BT Hot Mix Road & RCC Drain to the Pantakaluva Road from Srinivasa Nagar Colony (Sai Baba Temple Road) to Salipeta Road Junction at Poranki, Penamaluru Constituency	Rs.325.00 Lakhs
02/MAU61-USI0TT(RCW)/3/2026-TT	Providing BT Road from Namburu Kaza RB Road to Chiluvuru (DRRP No. 1170 832) in Pedakakani Mandal	Rs.580.00 Lakhs
03/MAU61-USI0TT(RRW)/6/2026-TT	Improvements to the Amaravati Township main road, Nowluru from putta road Jn to E-15 road	Rs.850.00 Lakhs

For further details please refer to **www.apeprocurement.gov.in and www.crda. ap.gov.in.**

Sd/- Commissioner, APCRDA, Amaravati.

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Maharashtra State Agricultural Marketing Board, Pune (MSAMB)

e-Tender Notice

MSAMB invites e-Tender for Construction of Godown having its storage capacity 1000 MT at Agricultural Produce Market Committee Dondaicha, District Dhule (Maharashtra State) Estimate cost of said work is Rs.132.17 Lakh (GST Extra).
For details, please visit www.msamb.com and https://mahatenders.gov.in.

Managing Director

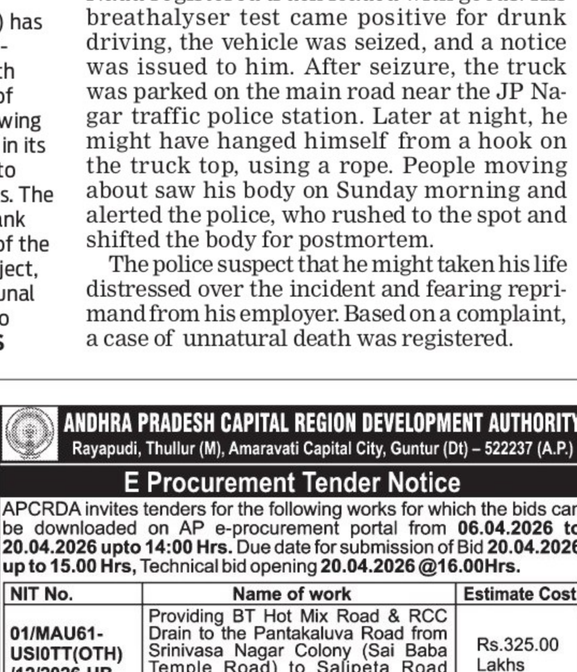
SBI Munnekolalu Branch (16296)
#76, Near Vagdevi Vilas School, Munekolalu, Marathahalli, Bengaluru - 560037

GOLD AUCTION NOTICE

Notice is hereby given for the information of, concerned that Gold ornaments pledged with **State Bank of India, Munnekolalu Branch (16296)** of the borrower have not returned the amount, after issued the Notice also. It will be Auctioned on **30.04.2026 by 4 PM** with present market price, in SBI Branch. For More details Contact: 9071112618

Customer Name	Loan Account	Amount Outstanding	Net Weight in Gms.	Gross Weight in Gms.
Mr. Dibya Ranjan Jena	44074247901	Rs.3,06,220/-	24.40	29.80

Date : 04.04.2026 **Sd/-**
Place : Bangalore **Branch Manager**



Dr. RM. ALAGAPPA CHETTIAR
(06.04.1909 - 05.04.1957)
ALAGAPPA UNIVERSITY PAYS ITS RESPECTFUL HOMAGE TO THE GREAT FOUNDER ON THE OCCASION OF HIS 117TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಕೊಳಗೇರಿ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಮಂಡಳಿ
ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರರವರ ಕಛೇರಿ, 1ನೇ ವಿಭಾಗ
ನಂ.55, ನೆಲಮಹಡಿ, ಅಭಯ ಸಂಕೀರ್ಣ ಭವನ, ರಿಸಲ್ದಾರ್‌ರಸ್ತೆ, ಶೇಷಾದ್ರಿಪುರಂ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು-560020

No.KSDB/EE/No 1.div/S.T/PB/IFT-20/2026-27/02 Date:01.04.2026

ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ (ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮೂಲಕ)

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಕೊಳಗೇರಿ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಮಂಡಳಿ, 1ನೇ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ವ್ಯಾಪ್ತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ 01 ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗೆ (ಕೆಡಬ್ಲ್ಯೂ-2) ಕೆಪಿಪಿ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ, ಸದರಿ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಯ ಇಂಡೆಂಟ್ ನಂಬರ್ ಈ ಕೆಳಕಂಡಂತಿರುತ್ತದೆ.

01. KSDB/2025-26/OW/WORK_INDENT447

1. Last date & time for receipt of Tenders: **Dt: 10.04.2026 upto 04.00 PM**
2. Date & Time for opening of Technical Bid Date:-**15.04.2026 at 11.00 AM.**

ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ವಿವರಗಳಿಗೆ ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರರು, 1ನೇ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಕೊಳಗೇರಿ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಮಂಡಳಿ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಅಥವಾ https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in ನಲ್ಲಿ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ.

ಸಹಿ/-
ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರರು,
ನಂ.1ನೇ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಕಕೊಅಮ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು

DIPR/CP/58/NR/2026-27

MANGALORE ELECTRICITY SUPPLY COMPANY LIMITED
(A Government of Karnataka undertaking)
Corporate Office, "MESCOM BHAVANA", Bejai, Mangalore - 575 004
Ph: 0824-2885795 CIN: U40109 KA 2002 SGC 030425

No. : E-299008 **Date: 27.03.2026**

TENDER NOTIFICATION (THROUGH KPP PORTAL ONLY)

MESCOM invites Tender for Supply of following materials:

Tender No	Particulars of Materials proposed to be Procured	Quantity (Nos)
MESCOM/2025-26/IND0157	LT Single Phase Reference Standard Meters	07
	LT Three Phase Reference Standard Meters	05
	HT Reference Standard Meters	03

The interested bidders may log on to **www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in** on or after **06.04.2026**

Sd/-,
Superintending Engineer (Ele) (Procurement)

DIPR/DK/KSMCA/24/26-27 dt: 04.04.2026

For Power Related Complaints & Assistance Call Toll Free Number 1912

Union Minister Pralhad Joshi has questioned why people should vote for the Congress that has increased prices of essential services and commodities. He alleged that the Congress has "resorted to daylight robbery" by raising prices of over 50 items

'NO INFRASTRUCTURE, PROPER POLICY FOR KANNADA FILM INDUSTRY'

ELECTED president of the Karnataka Film Chamber of Commerce for the second time, actor-politician **Jayamala** has a lot of dreams. She is also disappointed about the lack of infrastructure to nurture the film industry and encourage new talent to make an entry into filmdom. In an interaction with the editorial team of *The New Indian Express*, the former minister batted for a comprehensive policy for the film industry and the urgent need to complete the long-pending project of a film city. Excerpts...

You have been elected president of Karnataka Film Chamber of Commerce (KFCC) for a second term. What are the challenges you face as a woman?
I have worked at KFCC in various capacities. For two years, I was on the Executive Committee, three years as treasurer, and served as vice-president for four years. My mentor, R Lakshman, always advised me that if I were to become the president, I should first work as secretary. His words motivated me and helped me understand how things work as I served as secretary for four years, which boosted my confidence. But I also realised it's not easy for women. Some people openly ask why we should request a woman to get a job done. The mindset is still there. But I have taken it as a challenge and will prove my work through my actions.

How did you manage both acting and your work at KFCC?
I entered the film industry at the age of 13. My last film as a heroine was with Telugu actor Chiranjeevi in 1986. Then I took a break, and my daughter was born in 1990. The problem is once you are in the cinema field, it keeps dragging you. The fragrance of mascara and lipstick is so addictive. After I took a break, I could not sit idle. I kept myself busy reading, cooking and gardening. But once I engaged with KFCC, it was refreshing. Here we work for people we know, like producers, actors, distributors and exhibitors. So I enjoyed working there.

What differences do you see in cinema then and now?
Generations have changed from the time I entered the film industry. I am talking about 50 years -- we have seen making movies on celluloid to digital and now vertical movies. Earlier, there was a lot of love and affection within the industry, which I think is missing now. Today, there are OTTs, and people say single-screen theatres are not seeing much of an audience. But I feel we have to accept the change, get a hold on it and make movies commercially viable.

Do you think stars should review their remuneration according to the changing scenario?
Earlier, Kannada cinema had just seven centres, and movies of even legendary actors like Dr Rajkumar took two years to reach break-even point. But today, hundreds of crores of rupees are collected in a single day, and thousands of crores over weeks. The cost of production has also increased manifold, and the dynamics have changed entirely.

Should only star-driven films go pan-India? Or are even small movies with a limited budget accepted in that space?
All good films should reach everywhere, and good content will always find success. The best example is 'Su from So', which has no stars or a high budget. 'Kantara' became a huge hit as it portrayed our culture and tradition. Our producers should think more about our heritage and way of life, and continue working on stories that have strong nativity.

Is decision-making in the film chamber an easy task?
It is easy. When problems arise, we take them to the Conciliation Board, and many issues are resolved there. When the number of problems kept increasing, we planned to establish a Central Mediation Committee. In the industry, disputes often occur — between producers and artistes, and artistes and directors — so mediation is essential. The recent misunderstanding between the 'Love Mocktail' team and director Guru Deshpande was also resolved amicably. All members of the Mediation Committee are very understanding and kind-hearted, and no one wants to escalate an issue.

How does KFCC view the issue of copyrights and movie titles which are not in Kannada?
As of now, we don't have a system where we collect stories and then issue copyright to the creator and ensure the story isn't copied. Such a system exists in Delhi, Mumbai and Tamil Nadu. Earlier, we used to tell people to give movie titles only in Kannada. However, now movies are getting released in more than six languages, and they prefer to give common titles that sync with all languages.

There is a lack of infrastructure for the Kannada film industry... not even a film city. Will it happen during your tenure?
I feel disappointed in this regard. The ecosystem is great in Tamil Nadu, where Kannada films used to be shot earlier. The government assured us of infrastructure here and got us moved from Tamil Nadu to Karnataka in 1985. A film city was planned on 333 acres in Hesaraghatta. We thought it was our land and held several rounds of meetings. As the city grew, the land was used for other purposes, and it did not materialise. Now, a film city is planned in Mysuru, and 160 acres have been allotted for the purpose. We have urged the government to develop infrastructure at Rs 500 crore there. We are hopeful it will happen this time. But it is unfortunate that we don't have a comprehensive policy for the development of the film industry.

What kind of comprehensive policy is required?
Film education should be taught in a systematic and professional way. Here, many institutes come and go without students. In other countries, there are many institutes meant for various departments. Shouldn't we have such infrastructure? There are a lot of things happening in the animation sector. We call Bengaluru the Silicon City. Shouldn't we have our own exclusive GFX and Animation Park here? Why should we go out of state to make movies? Whenever a new technology comes, we are perplexed. If there is proper training infrastructure, such things will not happen. Another issue is ticket pricing. If you go to a multiplex in Tamil Nadu, it costs you Rs 150 and Rs 200 in Andhra Pradesh and Kerala. What is happening here? Also, with how many languages should we compete when our neighbouring states have no competition from other languages? The focus should be on making the film industry independent and robust.

What is your opinion on the high ticket price charged in multiplexes?
Ticket price has been capped at Rs 200 in Karnataka. The ticket price in multiplexes has remained an 'ethical question'. In other industries like Telugu and Tamil, ticket prices are capped at Rs 200-250, and multiplexes are reaping profits. However, in Karnataka, some have approached court opposing ticket price capping, stating they cannot make profits. If multiplexes take two steps forward, the Kannada industry will follow.

Are multiplexes charging in thousands, up to Rs 3,000, so the common man doesn't enter?
The matter is in court. We (film chamber) are ready for a free discussion on this and are pinning hopes on the government that it will support us. In March, on a Friday, 26 movies were released, of which 10 were Kannada. Other language films are doing well in multiplexes. In a year, 250 Kannada films are released. How do we protect the Kannada language and movies? The Kannada industry can grow only with the support of everyone, and multiplexes must realise it.

PIC: NAGARAJA GADEKAL

With few established stars, new talent needs to enter the industry. How can KFCC help in bringing and supporting fresh talent into the industry?
We have requested the CM and DCM to create an ecosystem where we can build film institutes, and have urged them to complete the film city project. Only then can new talents enter and sustain themselves in the industry.

What is the difference between the legendary actors of yesteryears and today?
Be it Rajkumar, Vishnuvardhan, Ambarish or Srinath, they all were committed to the industry, which is very rare now.

The Kannada film industry is heading towards its centenary. What do you have to say?
Yes, by 2034 the Kannada film industry will be completing its 100th year, marking a milestone. At this time, I want to register that we need students to learn about Kannada cinema, quality stories that can be made into movies and need a good audience which loves cinema. KFCC will take all necessary steps to ensure we get all the above facilities. When Sati Sulochana was released in 1934, it amazed the audience, and there was a lot of discussion about the technology used. From there till now, cinema has witnessed immense changes in all terms -- acting, dance, cameras used, fight sequences, etc. There are a lot of opportunities in Kannada cinema. We should make full use of technology to create impactful cinema and take the Kannada film industry to the next level.

People say old stories were gold, and there is a dearth of quality stories today... we see the same masala hit formula being churned?
Karnataka has rich stories, our language has a strong literary heritage and has fetched eight Jnanpith awards for the state. We have countless stories. The government is supporting novel writers with a grant of Rs 25 lakh. We should give more prominence to stories. It is not true that people are not going to theatres. However, cinema should also meet the expectations of people.

You say Kannada literature has got eight Jnanpiths. Isn't the recent controversy over a song a black mark on it?
People know what they want and what they don't. It was the people who flagged this song. The director apologised and has taken it back. Film-makers must be cautious and apply self-censorship, and ensure such instances are not repeated.

How did your political journey start?
When we are at our peak, politicians invite us for campaigning during elections. Once we attain a certain age and if political leaders think we can work there, they start offering opportunities. Eventually, we become part of a political party.

How was the transformation from becoming MLC to the role of minister?
Being in the Upper House (Council) gives more opportunities to help people and frame policies that matter to the people. Policy discussions there provide a lot of clarity and assurance, that is what I liked most about the House.

The government has given 33 per cent reservation to women legislators. But we see women are not given prominent ministries. What is your opinion? Also, when can we see Jayamala in Vidhana Soudha again?
Many women want to enter politics, and their dream will come true with this move. Indira Gandhi ruled the entire country. If not for her, I don't think women would have had any voice today. Women can handle any department, but they are not given enough opportunities. Women have to wait for an opportunity. Only if she gets an opportunity can she prove herself. It would be no wonder if a woman one day becomes chief minister of Karnataka. Our leaders have always shown women respect. Even strong leaders like Indira Gandhi faced challenges, but women still deserve equal chances to lead. Seeing me again in Vidhana Soudha is not in my hands (laughs).

Which one did you enjoy more, cinema or politics?
Cinema. The amount of satisfaction it gives cannot be described in words. It also gives us an identity. People recognize me through the cultural field, so that connection makes cinema more special for me.

What is that one change you want to bring in your second term at KFCC that people need to remember you for?
Theatres are closing down. Just imagine how it will be to have a theatre with cafes adjoined in each layout. The concept is kind of bringing theatres to homes. People can visit theatres in their layouts, just out of their homes, watch movies while children play and buy something to eat from adjacent cafes. It would be a wonderful relaxation for people, and within my tenure, I want to achieve this.

What message would you like to give to the next generation in the Kannada industry?
The next generation should become role models. They have more opportunities today, and they should make full use of all of them. They should grow and also help the Kannada industry grow. They must be ready to work across all languages. There are plenty of opportunities for women, and they must come forward and utilise them.

EXPRESS Dialogues

Surjewala hits out at Centre over LPG crisis

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

ALL-India Congress Committee (AICC) General Secretary and Karnataka in-charge of party affairs, Randeep Singh Surjewala, on Sunday, accused the Union Government of not increasing domestic gas production in the country.

He further accused the Centre of not supplying adequate LPG to Karnataka, thereby creating trouble on the ground for autorickshaw drivers, housewives, restaurants, and businesses.

"Nationally also, the myopic and lopsided policies of the BJP, besides the West Asia war, have led to this crisis. The PM and his petroleum minister and Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy, since he is aspiring to be the petroleum minister nowadays, should answer— Why do you have reserves only for seven days? Why did we not use the 11-year positive window when everything was hunkydory to create our capacities and to ramp up our capacities?" Surjewala asked.

AICC General Secretary Randeep Singh Surjewala addresses the media in Bengaluru on Sunday | NAGARAJA GADEKAL

Surjewala accused the Centre of stalling irrigation projects in Karnataka, such as the Upper Bhadra Project. "The deliberate silence of Karnataka BJP to the step-motherly treatment by the Modi government of the rights and interests of Kannadigas cannot remain unpunished. The BJP has betrayed Karnataka, and they do not deserve your vote," he said. He questioned Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy, as he had claimed that he would get clearances within five hours of assuming office. "The BJP-TDP government in Andhra Pradesh has challenged the Upper Bhadra project in the Supreme Court, while the Karnataka BJP Leaders maintain a conspiratorial silence. This project is crucial for the farmers of Davanagere, Chitradurga, Tumakuru, and Chikkamagaluru," he said, adding that the Centre has even stalled the Kalasa-Banduri project.

Slams Joshi on EV policy

Replying to Union Minister Pralhad Joshi's reported statement that Karnataka was withdrawing tax exemptions on Electric Vehicles (EVs), Surjewala hit back, alleging that the Centre was trying to completely finish off EVs.

"The EV policy was originally amended in the Union Budget by the Centre when they withdrew most of the EV benefits ...because the BJP government is trying to push the E20 petrol for which our vehicles are not ready," he said.

Zameer arrives in D'gere, says CM gave him task to win seat

G SUBHASH CHANDRA @ Davanagere

"Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has entrusted me with the task of ensuring the Congress candidate's victory in Davanagere South. I will handle it successfully and ensure Samarth Shamanur Mallikarjun wins his first election comfortably," said Housing minister BZ Zameer Ahmed Khan here on Sunday.

Soon after landing in the city, Zameer went straight to Horticulture Minister SS Mallikarjun's house, hugged him and exchanged pleasantries. Samarth is Mallikarjun's son. Zameer said the constituency is the Congress bastion and it will remain in future.

"Mallikarjun and I are close friends. There was some miscommunication, but now everything has been resolved and we are working together," he told his supporters.

"I will come here on April 5 for campaigning and to sort out the small misunderstandings. I have been given a task to convince disgruntled workers. Our team is already working on that. In the 2023 Assembly elections, four or five people, including Amanullah Khan, contested. But Shamanur Shivashankarappa won with a landslide. This time, too, Congress will win. Muslims know about BJP's communalism and will not support that party," he said.

"The media spread false news that there is a rift between Mallikarjun and I. But the reason for me staying away from Karnataka was totally different as AICC has assigned me the task of working in Kerala," he said.

"I will campaign at Bagalkot on Sunday and on Monday. We will win both constituencies," he said.Mallikarjun, who was present with Zameer, said the confusion caused by small issues has been resolved. He expressed confidence that Zameer will resolve minor grievances of Muslims.

Housing Minister BZ Zameer Ahmed Khan wishes Congress Davanagere South candidate Samarth Shamanur in Davanagere on Sunday | EXPRESS

7 booked on charges of threatening students to vote for Congress

BAGALKOT: The police have booked cases against seven persons for allegedly threatening college students to vote for the Congress and not the BJP in the April 9 Bagalkot bypoll. The accused have been booked under various sections, including those related to unlawful assembly and disturbing peace of the BNS. The BJP has alleged that Congress workers were threatening college students to vote for the Grand Old Party. LoP R Ashoka accused the district and taluk administrations and the police of acting like "puppets" of the Congress government. Addressing the media, Ashoka claimed that a few were distributing pamphlets in a college campus warning students that they would be jailed if they voted for BJP. He said a complaint had been filed by former Deputy CM Govind Karjol, following which police detained some individuals. He, however, criticised the handling of the case, alleging that the accused were not treated as per procedure. Ashoka alleged that Congress workers resorted to "hooliganism" at the behest of Deputy CM DK Shivakumar. BJP candidate Veeranna Charantimath alleged that Congress leaders, fearing defeat, were using student groups to intimidate voters and influence the election. He also accused the ruling party of preparing to distribute large sums of money to secure victory. He alleged that Congress workers brought youth in saffron stoles who entered the college campus to threaten the students to vote for the Congress. The BJP has submitted a formal complaint to the Deputy Commissioner Sangappa seeking strict action against those involved. Meanwhile, Congress leaders, including District In-charge Minster RB Timmapur, have downplayed the incident. ENS

HDK lambasts Siddu, says Cong taking credit for Centre's schemes

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Davanagere

LAUNCHING a scathing attack on CM Siddaramaiah, Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy on Sunday said that the State Government takes credit for schemes implemented by the Union Government. Speaking to reporters in Davanagere, Kumaraswamy called Siddaramaiah "Kanna Ramaiah and not Anna Ramaiah". The former CM said that free rice for BPL cardholders is given by the Centre and not State Government.

"I have seen CM Siddaramaiah, Deputy CM DK Shivakumar and AICC General Secretary Randeep Singh Surjewala speak about this. They are saying that the Congress government has given the rice... but it comes from the Centre," he said. "To build 15 lakh homes, there is a need for Rs 28,000 crore. However, the present government has granted Rs 2,000 crore," he further hit out at the State Government.

He praised PM Narendra Modi for his handling of the LPG crisis amid the West Asia war. "The Congress is blaming the Centre and the PM. Our PM has cordial relationships with various countries, and LPG and crude oil is reaching our shores from the Strait of Hormuz. The PM has taken various countries into confidence," Kumaraswamy said.

Challenging the CM to build a regional party and win, Kumaraswamy said, "With the help of our workers, we won 40 seats last time. You speak about Deve Gowda's family politics, then what is your son doing? Did you bring him for transfer politics?" he questioned.

He said that the CM and the Congress are constantly at loggerheads with the Centre. "When this is the case, what development are you going to bring to the state? You said that Karnataka is in second place in the country in terms of GDP. So what is the need for implementing the guarantees in a wealthy state?" he asked.

He said that all ministers in the state are campaigning for Congress candidates, leaving the administration in the lurch. "Vidhana Soudha is completely empty. Apart from the five guarantees, the CM has no other achievement to show to the voters. The government is yet to take off," he added.

Andhra Pradesh CM N Chandrababu Naidu said the state government will launch a 100-day special action plan on water conservation from Tadipatri in Anantapur district on Monday. The programme titled "Water Security – Responsibility of Irrigation Associations" aims to strengthen water conservation across state

POLL WALL ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

Stalin wants to loot Pondy, says EPS

PUDUCHERRY: AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami on Sunday alleged that Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin was eyeing Puducherry for "exploitation" due to high liquor sales. Campaigning in support of AIADMK candidates A Anbazhagan (Oupalam) and A Gandhi (Orleampeth), Palaniswami accused Stalin of seeking to replicate in Puducherry what he described as a regime of "collection, commission and corruption" in Tamil Nadu. "He (Stalin) will come here for campaigning. It is not enough that he looted TN; he is looking to do the same here. In Tamil Nadu, it is collection, commission and corruption. Thousands of crores have been misappropriated in Tasmac alone," he alleged. "He is not coming here to exploit your resources. Stay alert; otherwise, what is happening in Tamil Nadu will happen here." Highlighting the NDA's performance in Puducherry, EPS said AINRC leader and Chief Minister N Rangasamy has implemented several welfare measures over the past five years.

NDA WILL USHER IN PROSPEROUS KERALA IF VOTED TO POWER: SHAH

Shah promises Kerala first AIIMS in 2 years of NDA govt taking office

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Kochi/Kozhikode/T'Puram

Reaching out to the Christian community on Easter, Home Minister Amit Shah urged voters in Kerala to back the BJP-led NDA in the upcoming assembly elections, saying the alliance would usher in a "prosperous Kerala" if voted to power. Addressing a public meeting in Kunnathunad constituency in Ernakulam district, Shah said the NDA government, if elected, would act decisively on pending issues, including the alleged Sabarimala gold scam.

"Those responsible will be punished within two months of the NDA coming to power," he asserted.

He also promised that Kerala would get its first AIIMS, adding that the premier healthcare institute would become operational within two years of an NDA government assuming office in the state.

Campaigning on Easter, Shah extended greetings to the Christian community and appealed for their support. His outreach comes at a time when sections of the community have expressed concerns over proposed amendments to the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act.

Shah reiterated that the NDA stood for "justice for all and appeasement of none", claiming that the alliance's governance model across the country reflected this principle. He also cited the ban on the Popular Front of India (PFI), stating that when the organisation allegedly engaged in anti-national activities, "within one day, we put all their cadre behind bars". Referring to the Munambam land dispute, he claimed that while both alliances remained silent when the Waqf Board attempted to take over land belonging to around 600 residents, it was the NDA government that stepped in with amendments to safeguard their property.

He described the LDF and the UDF as "two-faced parties" that fight each other in Kerala but align elsewhere. Taking a dig at Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, Shah alleged that the Left government was rebranding centrally sponsored schemes to claim credit. "Modi sends the project and funds, and Vijayan adds his name to it," he said, pointing to welfare schemes and infrastructure projects like NH 66. Shah also launched a sharp attack on Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, accusing him of misleading the public on issues such as fuel prices. In a sarcastic remark, he said, "Fuel prices have indeed risen to Rs 460 per litre—but in Pakistan, not in India."

Union Home Minister Amit Shah at a roadshow ahead of the Kerala Assembly election, in Kozhikode, Kerala on Sunday | EXPRESS

Vijayan flags 'dilution of South's voice'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

KERALA Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan also expressed concerns about reports suggesting a proposal for a 50% across-the-board increase in Lok Sabha seats. "In such a scenario, even if Kerala's representation were to increase to 30 seats, a state like Uttar Pradesh would see its strength jump to 120 or more. This would result in a systematic dilution of the democratic voice of the South," he said.

Vijayan further said that by shifting the balance of power so heavily toward one region, the Union government is signalling that the developmental achievements of the South achieved through decades of investment in health and education are now a political liability.

"This is not an 'equitable delimitation' but a demographic coup that undermines the fundamental principles of federalism," he asserted. Vijayan also urged the Union government to move beyond vague assurances and provide a concrete, constitutional guarantee that no state will suffer a reduction in its relative political influence due to its success in social governance.

"The unity of India depends on the equal respect and power-sharing of all its regions, regardless of their population size. The Prime Minister must ensure that the notion of political parity applies to the rights of states that have led the nation in progress," he said.

Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah with UDF candidate AKM Ashraf at an election rally in Manjeshwar assembly constituency of Kasaragod, Kerala on Sunday

Kerala under Vijayan is sliding towards bankruptcy: Siddu

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Mangaluru

KARNATAKA Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Sunday criticised his Kerala counterpart Pinarayi Vijayan, warning that the neighbouring state is sliding toward bankruptcy under the LDF government.

Addressing an election rally seeking votes for UDF candidate AKM Ashraf in the Manjeshwar assembly segment of Kasaragod district of Kerala, Siddaramaiah contrasted Karnataka's performance with Kerala's under the LDF, pointing to rising unemployment and inflation.

"In Karnataka, unemployment is 2.5%, in Kerala it is 8%. Inflation in Kerala is over 8%, more than double Karnataka's," Siddaramaiah said. He also said that Kerala's debt-to-GDP ratio is 35%, exceeding the recommended 25%, and fiscal deficit at 3.5%, surpassing the ideal 3%.

Urging voters to back UDF, he said, "UDF will implement welfare guarantees just as we did in Karnataka. Congress and UDF are always in favour of the poor." Turning his guns at BJP, Siddaramaiah accused the party of being anti-Constitution, anti-poor, anti-Dalit, and anti-minorities and favouring the rich and corporates. He cited the Congress government's five guarantees in Karnataka, which spend Rs 52,000 crore annually on propeople initiatives claiming the programmes have strengthened the state's economy despite BJP warnings.

Earlier in his speech, the CM said Manjeshwar should have been part of Karnataka. "Whenever I visit Manjeshwar, it feels like I have stepped into Karnataka, because Kannada resonates in every conversation here. Though this land is part of Kerala, I feel that it should have been part of Karnataka. It is a matter of pride that great literary figures like Rashtrakavi Manjeshwara Govinda Pai and Kayyara Kiyanna Rai have brought fame to this region. Even today, despite being in Kerala, you continue to speak, preserve, and honour the Kannada language," he said.

He also addressed an election rally in Kasaragod assembly segment and sought votes for UDF candidate Kallatra Mahin.

UDF will implement welfare guarantees just as we did in Karnataka. Congress and UDF are always in favour of the poor

Siddaramaiah, Karnataka Chief Minister

Both Modi, Pinarayi weakening democratic institutions: Kharge

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

AICC President **Mallikarjuna Kharge** on Sunday launched a sharp attack on both the Narendra Modi government and Pinarayi Vijayan's Kerala LDF regime at a rally in Kottarakkara, accusing them of practising the "unhealthy politics of control" while weakening democratic institutions.

Addressing a large gathering in Kollam district, the Congress chief declared that the upcoming polls were not just about changing the government but "saving the future of Keralam, its prosperity, and its institutions of democracy". He alleged there is a dangerous concentration of power and suppression of dissent under both BJP at the Centre and CPI(M) in Kerala over the past decade.

Kharge criticised the FCRA Amendment Bill 2026 as "an attack on civil society and Christian institutions", drawing parallels to the Waqf Amendment and warning that such moves undermine India's pluralistic ethos and the Constitution drafted by Dr BR Ambedkar.

Kharge drew loud applause with his remark, "Are Narendra Modi and Pinarayi Vijayan really different? Flags are different, but surprisingly the style is the same!" He painted a grim picture of Kerala's financial crisis, holding Finance Minister KN Balagopal responsible for exploding debt, delayed welfare, and Rs 600 crore cuts in SC/ST schemes. He also slammed the deteriorating law and order situation, custodial violence, and Sabarimala gold theft case. He highlighted people's struggles with rising LPG prices, cost of living, and man-animal conflict.

Unveiling the party's campaign promises, he announced the 'Indira Guarantees' - Rs 3,000 monthly pension, Rs 25 lakh health insurance in the name of Oommen Chandy, free KSRTC travel for women, Rs 1,000 monthly support for college girls, Rs 5 lakh interest-free youth loans, a dedicated Ministry for Senior Citizens, and Rs 300 base price for rubber. He introduced key UDF candidates from the region and urged voters to choose democracy over dictatorship.

In a major show of solidarity, Karnataka Congress has deployed over 300 leaders, including MLAs, ex-MLAs, ministers and ex-ministers, to campaign in Kerala, with CM Siddaramaiah, DCM DK Shivakumar and minister KJ George leading the effort. A special flight carrying several leaders landed in Kerala on Sunday, and the team is expected to stay until polling ends. Karnataka leaders plan to focus on central and southern districts, including Kottarakkara, leveraging their 2023 election experience to strengthen UDF's ground game.

'All agencies worked in coordination'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

FOREST Minister Eshwar Khandre said lack of mobile connectivity in the forest made it difficult to determine her location, leading to delays in the search. "If anyone goes missing while trekking, it is our duty to find them. We have fulfilled that responsibility," he said. Khandre said Sharanya went missing after she lost her way while trekking with a group of 15 members and a guide. They realised she was missing only after returning to the base camp.

Khandre said Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and AICC General Secretary KC Venugopal had expressed concern over the missing trekker. As per CM's directions, an additional 40 forest personnel were deployed on Sunday. "All agencies worked in coordination to ensure her safe rescue," he added.

Family heaves sigh of relief as missing trekker found safe

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Kozhikode

THE family of **Sharanya**, the young woman from Nadapuram in Kozhikode who went missing during a trek in Kodagu, expressed immense relief on Sunday evening after confirmation that she had been found safe inside a forest area.

Her parents, Gopi and Shailaja, said the past few days had been filled with anxiety and sleepless nights, and that news of her rescue finally brought the calm they had been desperately hoping for. "We are deeply relieved and grateful to everyone who stood with us during these difficult hours," her father said, his voice reflecting both exhaustion and gratitude.

He acknowledged the coordinated efforts of the Kerala and Karnataka administrations, noting that Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan had spoken directly with Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to intensify the search. He also appreciated the intervention of KC Venugopal, who remained in constant contact with officials in Karnataka throughout the operation.

Officials and her brother, who are currently with Sharanya, have informed the family that she has been shifted to a secure location and given initial medical attention. She is expected to return home after further evaluation.

HEAVY RAIN FORECAST FOR PARTS OF SOUTH TAMIL NADU

CHENNAI : The Regional Meteorological Centre (RMC) has forecast heavy rain at isolated places in Virudhunagar, Dindigul and Theni districts on Monday. RMC added that light to moderate rain is likely at isolated places, accompanied by thunderstorms and lightning, at one or two locations over districts in the the Western Ghats and parts of South Tamil Nadu. Dry weather is expected to prevail over the rest of Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Karaikal. A trough associated with an upper-air cyclonic circulation over Rayalaseema in Andhra Pradesh has extended up to South Tamil Nadu at about 0.9km above mean sea level, triggering rainfall in parts of the region.

SPLASH SQUAD

Unbothered by the downpour, children enjoy a game of football, splashing through puddles in Bhubaneswar, Odisha on Sunday | DEBADATTA MALLICK

Another assault on federalism, says Siddu

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

CM Siddaramaiah said that even after expanding the Lok Sabha to 816 seats, the collective share of southern states remains around 24% which is unchanged and already modest. States that performed better in population control and governance are being penalised. "Karnataka, which is a key driver of national growth, risks being deliberately sidelined. If our share does not improve while the numerical dominance of larger states grows, what exactly is Karnataka gaining from this exercise," he asked the PM.

He said the result is a widening imbalance. "Today, UP has 52 more seats than Karnataka. This gap will increase to 78. Maharashtra's lead over Karnataka will expand from 20 to 30 seats. This is not just expansion; it is concentration of power. This is not cooperative federalism. This is another blatant assault on federalism, designed to concentrate power and silence states like Karnataka. Having failed to win the trust of southern people, the Modi Government is now attempting to weaken our voice through a manipulative restructuring of representation," he alleged. Siddaramaiah said such a structural change cannot be pushed without consultations or public debate. "At a time of economic and global challenges, the Union Government is more focused on political arithmetic over national priorities. The people of Karnataka and all who believe in federalism deserve fairness, respect, and transparency. We will firmly oppose any attempt to weaken our voice'' he added.

Shakti beneficiaries to get personalised smart cards

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

Nearly three years after the launch of the Shakti scheme, allowing women free bus travel, beneficiaries are set to receive personalised smart cards, with the Karnataka government initiating steps to implement a National Common Mobility Card-based ticketing system across state-run bus corporations.

Under the proposed system, any NCMC cardholder will be able to travel across buses operated by the four state-run transport corporations. Shakti scheme beneficiaries, meanwhile, will be issued a dedicated 'Shakti card' to avail free travel, a move that was planned alongside the launch of the scheme.

Beneficiaries can obtain the Shakti card by submitting a formal application. Through e-KYC verification, their details will be digitally captured and linked to the card, enabling seamless validation during travel without manual ticketing.

Once implemented, the system is expected to record usage by beneficiaries in real time, improving transparency, preventing misuse, and ensuring accurate identification. Officials said the move aligns with state government directions to strengthen data capture and streamline service delivery under welfare schemes. A tender has been floated to appoint a transaction advisor who will assess requirements and guide the selection of a system integrator for implementation across the state's four transport corporations.

Sources said the project is targeted for completion within 10 months from the appointment of the transaction advisor. However, passenger-level rollout is expected to begin within six months in a phased manner, with initial deployment likely across select corporations before scaling up statewide.

The NCMC-based system will also integrate broader smart mobility features, allowing commuters to use a single card across multiple modes of transport in the future through simple recharge. Transport officials said the initiative would reduce dependence on manual verification, enhance operational efficiency, improve commuter convenience, and enable better monitoring of subsidy-driven schemes such as Shakti.

Drinking water scarcity in few pockets, steps taken to mitigate it, says Priyank

BENGALURU: Karnataka RDPR and IT/BT Minister Priyank Kharge said that there is drinking water scarcity in 324 villages across 60 taluks in 20 districts of the state. He said that while drinking water is supplied in tankers to 76 villages, the remaining villages are getting water through borewells. Priyank said that Rs 60 crore has already been allocated to districts to implement emergency works. Apart from this, an additional Rs 48 crore has been released to the districts to clear pending bills of works carried out under the task force as of March, 2026. Also, Rs 14.5 crore has been allocated to repair drinking water purification units, he said. The minister said to ensure an uninterrupted supply of drinking water in rural areas this summer, precautionary measures have been taken across the state. Officials at the district, taluk and panchayat levels are continuously monitoring the situation and holding review meetings. He said they have taken measures to prevent any disruption in drinking water supply in rural areas.

EDITORIAL

"Earth is the cradle of humanity, but one cannot live in a cradle forever" — Konstantin Tsiolkovsky

INDIAN EXPRESS IS NOT AN INDUSTRY. IT IS A MISSION.

— Ramnath Goenka

ROLL REVISION SPARKS DEBATE ON FAIRNESS & PRE-POLL DUE PROCESS

DURING the Supreme Court hearing on challenges to those declared ineligible to vote after the special intensive revision in West Bengal, Justice Joymalya Bagchi observed that "even if a person is excluded and is unable to vote in this election", they can be included later if appellate tribunals consider their exclusion unjustified. The statement was made in the context of the appeals process for voters who remain excluded after verification is completed.

The context is marked by numbers. Over 60 lakh voters were placed under adjudication and nearly 45 percent of the adjudication cases disposed of entered the excluded list. These names don't figure in the supplementary lists and won't be able to vote in this election. Under Election Commission guidelines, voters have 15 days to file appeals before 19 appellate tribunals set up to hear them. The scale and urgency have led political parties to set up local committees to assist voters in filing appeals. The Commission says the tribunals "shall cease to exist after all appeals are disposed of", meaning the process has no specified deadline.

Justice Bagchi's observation, concerning these excluded voters, is grounded in the Representation of the People Act, 1950 which permits continuous revision of electoral rolls through claims, objections and appeals. Being left out in one round does not cancel a person's right to register if later found eligible. Courts have consistently held that elections must continue on schedule, even when mistakes occur in the process.

Yet, when exclusions affect lakhs of people, the question arises whether voters truly had a chance to challenge removal before the election. Articles 14 and 21 require that election officials act fairly and follow proper procedures. A process that causes large-scale, time-limited exclusions may still raise doubts about whether these rules are properly followed, even if formal remedies are available.

The core issue is not the availability of *post facto* remedies but whether the SIR's design and timing ensured a real and effective opportunity to be heard before disenfranchisement in a live election. Similar is the plight of party candidates on the adjudication list, who wonder whether they can contest if they remain excluded. Justice Bagchi's formulation preserves the legality of subsequent correction. Yet the inability to vote or contest in a specific election, once lost, cannot be retrospectively restored, making the present exclusions a matter of immediate constitutional significance.

ARTEMIS II: DEEP SPACE SYSTEMS ARE ON TRIAL

PRECISELY 53 years, three months and 14 days after the last human returned from landing on the Moon during the Apollo 17 mission, Nasa launched the 10-day Artemis II crewed mission, marking a historic attempt to return humans to the lunar environment. However, Artemis II will not land on the Moon. It will instead be a flyby mission. It will, however, set a record for the farthest distance humans have ever travelled into space, as the Orion capsule—carrying four astronauts, Reid Wiseman, Victor Glover, Christina Koch and Jeremy Hansen—will travel about 6,400 km beyond the Moon, a feat no Apollo mission attempted. Artemis II will form a loop beyond lunar orbit to achieve this distance.

Of the 24 US astronauts who travelled to the Moon or its vicinity between 1968 and 1972, 12 walked on the lunar surface. All were men and part of the six crewed Apollo missions that landed on the Moon. Artemis II, however, will carry the first woman astronaut (Koch) and the first astronaut of colour (Glover) into the vicinity of the Moon—indeed, the first time either will travel beyond low Earth orbit.

Artemis II is not just a symbolic trip. What matters most is what it can prove—or fail to prove. The Orion spacecraft must demonstrate that it can sustain astronauts far beyond Earth's orbit, with systems that provide air, water and a safe living environment. Its heat shield must also withstand the extreme speed and heat of reentry into Earth's atmosphere. At the same time, the Space Launch System will undergo its first real test carrying a crew, where safety cannot rely solely on calculations and assumptions but must be proven under real conditions. A key experiment on the mission, AVATAR (A Virtual Astronaut Tissue Analog Response), will measure the effects of radiation and microgravity on the human body.

The mission represents the first step in an ambitious plan to establish permanent lunar bases while laying the groundwork for crewed missions to Mars and beyond. Other, less obvious tests are equally important: the crew must navigate with reduced support from Earth and continue operations despite communication delays. Under the Artemis programme, this mission will determine what comes next. If it succeeds, it will validate an entire exploration architecture.

QUICK TAKE

THE WHIP'S GRIP

THE Himachal Pradesh government's move to deny pensions to defecting legislators to protect electoral mandates raises democratic concerns. Built upon the Constitution's Tenth Schedule which already enforces strict party discipline, the amendment further increases the cost of dissent. In practice, this risks turning legislative voting into a mechanical exercise, in which whips predetermine outcomes. Debate may become symbolic, committees less effective, as members hesitate to question official positions. While curbing opportunistic defections is necessary, excessive penalisation blurs lines between defection and legitimate dissent. This shifts power decisively towards party leadership, reducing legislators to mere vote carriers. The challenge is to distinguish between opportunistic defection and legitimate dissent—something the current framework fails to do.

Sri Lanka has balanced global powers while staying out of the war. Yet its real challenge is a growing energy crisis straining its people

WHEN THE WEST ASIA CRISIS HITS HOME AND HARD

DILRUKSHI HANDUNNETTI

Award-winning journalist and lawyer; founder and director of Colombo-based Center for Investigative Reporting

SOURAV ROY

AS the West Asia conflict continues into its fifth week, Sri Lanka may feel it has avoided diplomatic wrangles and has not become a target of hostility from warring nations. Colombo has strived to maintain neutrality and avoid being coerced into taking sides. But the challenges are far from over.

The island, an unlikely participant in the US-Israeli-Iran war, grabbed headlines when the US Navy torpedoed IRIS Dena, an Iran-flagged vessel in the Indian Ocean, close to Sri Lanka. During the Raisina Dialogue 2026 last month, Sri Lankan foreign minister Vijitha Herath was repeatedly questioned about the repatriation of Iranian sailors, but he kept his answers simple: Colombo's response to the distressed Iranian vessels IRIS Dena and IRIS Bushehr was guided by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the principles of international humanitarian law. He sidestepped attempts to extract further explanations.

Proof of Colombo's stance was also in the refusal to permit two American warplanes to land. Around the same time when Iranian vessels requested permission for three naval vessels to dock in Sri Lanka, a US request to deploy two warplanes equipped with anti-ship missiles to land at the Mattala Rajapaksa International Airport was refused to maintain neutrality, President Anura Kumara Dissanayake told parliament recently. Colombo has been lauded for navigating such choppy diplomatic waters with aplomb.

Maintaining neutrality is difficult, whether a party to the conflict or not. Colombo understands it should prioritise neighbouring India and balance China, while also not provoking the US and Israel, two old allies. But Sri Lanka's real test may lie elsewhere, in how the island faces the full force of an energy crisis.

The theatre of war is elsewhere; Colombo has no direct role but always has strong interests. The US is Sri Lanka's main trading partner, and Iran imports high volumes of Ceylon tea. Thus, for Sri Lanka, the impact of the West Asia conflict is very real and economic. The disrupted global supply chains, disrupted shipping activities and rising oil prices are already having an impact that will worsen, even if the war ends soon. The entire world may soon need to start over, and for Sri Lanka—which has been struggling to herald an economic comeback after the debilitating 2022 collapse—short-term fixes are unlikely to help turn things around.

Colombo is heavily energy-dependent and to meet its annual demand of 14,150 GWh, a steady supply of coal and petroleum is required. Even as Colombo reassures the public of steady fuel and gas supplies, people are already feeling the weight of the war. Colombo received 38,000 MT of fuel from India last week and is locked in discussions with Russia, after sanctions on Moscow were temporarily lifted.

Meanwhile, Colombo has taken urgent measures in response. Fuel is now rationed via a QR code system, and the country has a four-day workweek. People are now grappling with fuel quotas, electricity and gas price hikes, which are driving up food and transport costs and adding to the already prohibitive cost of living. The surge in prices and inflation will slow down tourism and impact remittances from the war-hit Gulf countries. Sri Lanka's Petroleum Distributors Association, meanwhile, will hold a silent protest on April 6 over unresolved issues affecting their operations. To cap it all, the government has also imposed water cuts as the nation prepares to herald the Sinhala-Hindu New Year in a few days.

As Sri Lanka braces for water and power cuts with a distant war's impacts reaching home, the National People's Power administration is facing its first proper test of credibility following the country's energy minister, Kumara Jayakody, being indicted in the Colombo High Court over allegations of corruption dating back to his tenure as a senior public official.

While the matter dates back to his tenure as procurement manager of the Ceylon Fertiliser Company, the issue has raised strong criticism against the government which came to office on a strong anti-corruption platform, for not asking Jayakody to step down, and is willing to entrust the vital energy sector to someone who is now under a corruption probe. Sri Lanka's Commission to Investigate Allegations of Bribery and Corruption filed corruption charges against Jayakody for a questionable procurement that caused millions in losses. The more recent controversy is linked to a coal purchase under his watch as energy minister, denting the administration's reputation.

The government has so far managed to oversee diplomatic matters and maintain neutrality despite challenges. However, the government's real challenge will be its response to the impending energy crisis and bolstering the island's energy security. The country lacks a national energy policy and mechanisms to weather crises and shocks, which has increased public questioning of its capacity.

It is also not acceptable to use war as an excuse for failing to ensure energy security, as industries will require reliable energy supplies to keep the economy moving, even as it slows due to external shocks.

It is indeed healthy to take no sides in this war or any other. Colombo has a well-defended position of non-alignment. It is prudent to have avoided offering Sri Lankan soil to be used as anyone's base or its waters. The Gulf Cooperation Council countries offer a classic example of being made collateral damage, and Sri Lanka must avoid such an alignment that can prove expensive, both in terms of finances and national security. In these extremely challenging times, Sri Lanka should prioritise its economic interest and energy security, drawing important lessons from 2022. Political stability is strongly linked to economic stability, and in the absence of normalcy and the weight of hardships, people tend to turn against governments. It is time to put the house in order and to clear its stable. It can start with the energy minister.

(Views are personal)
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THE ORIGINAL DHURANDHAR

RENUKA NARAYANAN

FAITHLINE

LAST Thursday was Hanuman Jayanti and I discovered, quite by chance, that one of his names is 'Dhurandhar'. It is the last and 108th name in the '*Hanuman Ashtothara Shata Namavali*' (The 108 Names of Hanuman), where it appears in the line, '*Om Sita sameta Sri Rama padaseva dhurandharaya namah*'. This means, 'Salutations to the valiant one who serves Sri Rama, along with Sita'. The '*Hanuman Namavali*' is chanted to invoke Hanuman's strength, dedication and intelligence.

Dhurandhar itself means a master, leader or one who bears a heavy burden or responsibility. So, the original Dhurandhar is Hanuman himself, who went into enemy territory and burnt it down. A pleasing discovery, is it not? I don't see the recent films as 'propaganda' or 'anti-Muslim'. It is not even against the people of Pakistan in general, and shows their women in a respectful light. Based on actual historical events, it is specifically against the ideology of State-funded terrorists from Pakistan who have attacked and killed Indian people. Should there be a problem with that for loyal Indians?

Speaking of which, a memory comes back from 1977 of a spot of political culture that nobody questioned then but just swallowed whole as the natural order of things. In those days, every film screening in a theatre was preceded by a *sarkari* black-and-white films division documentary, followed by the national anthem. I remember one such documentary, which was all praise for Indira Gandhi and had a song with the line '*Khichri sarkar nahi chalega*'. This was a dig at the then-nascent Janata Party coalition, which eventually won the 1977 General Election. And, when the electorate was fed up with the Janata Party, it brought Indira Gandhi right back in 1980.

A cinematic instance of power-pleasing happened in 1980 with the blockbuster hit film *Qurbani*. Produced, directed by and starring Feroz Khan, it also starred Zeenat Aman and had a hit song by the young Pakistani singer Nazia Hassan, if anybody remembers. The screening of *Qurbani* began with a black-and-white documentary-style tribute by Feroz Khan to Sanjay Gandhi, condoling the death of Indira Gandhi's 'prince' as Khan referred to him. Extraordinary that, then too, there was not one squeak of protest or even a stray comment that this was hardly democratic language, that too in praise of a blatantly extra-constitutional authority who had no legal basis. His power came entirely from being the prime minister's son, whose *putramoh* or son-love reminded the silently seething public of Dhritrashtra's disastrous *putramoh* for Duryodhana.

Be that as it may, as vignettes from history, let us return to the delightful topic of Hanuman. I would like to revisit some inspiring points about him, for both North and South India are deeply in love with Hanuman's 'action hero' persona. He is also held up as an ideal of humility and devotion despite being a superstar in his own right.

AFP

'Dhurandhar', which means a master, leader or one who bears a heavy burden or responsibility, has originally been attributed to Hanuman among his 108 names. Revered as an 'action hero' figure, he is also held up as an ideal of humility and devotion affirmed by his longing for and service to Rama

These qualities are described in the Sanskrit verse '*Yatra yatra*', *Raghunatha kirtanam, tatra tatra krta-mastakanjalim/ Vashpavari paripurna lochanam, Marutim namata rakshasa-antakam*. It means, 'Wherever the glory of Rama is sung, there, with his hands clasped over his bowed head and eyes overflowing with tears, is Hanuman; I salute Hanuman who vanquishes demons'.

Hanuman is considered a *nityasuri*, or one who is free of karma for eternity. He is also believed to still be on Earth, helping us in our struggles through life. This belief has gone so deep that wherever the *Ramayana* is recited or discoursed upon, the organisers quietly place a *palaha* or wooden board on the stage, a seat of honour reserved for Hanuman. He is thought to be in attendance, although no one can tell in which guise. He won't actually sit there unless he comes invisibly, they say, but just in case he does, we shan't be found wanting in respect and affection.

The belief in Hanuman's protective presence is so cherished that you'll find people muttering '*Jai* Bajrang Bali' as their flight takes off or before they hit a rapid in the river or drive up a steep road in the hills. Many across the country know Tulsidas's '*Hanuman Chalisa*' and value its significance as a *kavacham*, or protective shield. There are several good versions available online to hear as a daily boost.

Another favourite is the verse, '*Buddhir balam yasho dhairyam, Nirbhayatvam arogatam/Ajadyam vaak patutvam cha, Hanumat smaranat bhavet*, meaning, 'By remembering Hanuman, I gain intelligence, strength, a good reputation, courage, fearlessness and good health. I avoid dullness, and I become eloquent'. There's nothing in there about winning lotteries or landing that dream job. Instead, it's about 'personality development', about wanting to be strong, confident and bright, and achieve tejas or a lustrous character. It is clearly meant to inspire the reciter to become a positive person and an asset to society, not a demon of destruction.

Hanuman discovers the spiritual path in a striking way. There is an undiscovered longing in him that lights up when he sees Rama. He does not know who Rama is or what he's all about. He does not know that Rishi Valmiki finds that Rama has integrity, courage, correct behaviour, gratitude, honesty, dedication to his principles, concern for all beings, self-control, a tight hold on temper and a lack of jealousy at all times. Hanuman himself evolves into such a person, a worthy *bhakt*. It is hard not to love a hero who helps us on the road to personal growth and personifies a true Dhurandhar.

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MAILBAG

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War-affected Gulf

Ref: *Kings and rulers* (Apr 5). As a UAE resident, remittances to home will take a hit if the war stretches any longer. Donald Trump seems to have lost the plot. He and his war secretary hardly have any idea of the ground realities in the conflict-ridden Gulf.
Joseph Kunnirickal, Kochi

Emerging tech

Ref: *Into the era of techno diplomacy* (Apr 5). This can bring about brighter careers and sustainable employment opportunities. Concerned departments must roll out skill-based programmes, build up innovation hubs and tie up with industries to make this vision a reality. Coaching centres, too, should branch out beyond conventional training and take up emerging technologies.
Raju Kolluru, Kakinada

Screens shut

Ref: *Beyond screen habits & social media bans* (Apr 5). Digital immersion and manipulative influence play havoc on mental health. Apart from legislative curbs, social media needs to evolve responsible design patterns. Parental vigilance is imperative to identify early signs for effective de-addiction.
Rajarao Kumar, Bengaluru

Dire strait

Ref: *Trump issues ultimatum* (Apr 5). As the US fervently desires to hasten peace talks, there is no gainsaying that Iran should acquiesce and open the Strait of Hormuz to restore normalcy so that the peace-loving citizens all over the world are not put in 'dire straits'.
T M Uday Shankar, Hyderabad

Half truths

Ref: *Stalin, Pradhan clash* (Apr 5). As ever, Stalin is myopic and insular about the three-language formula, forgetting that the country is not just North and South but East and West too. Non-Southern parts have not only Hindi but also Marathi, Gujarati, Punjabi, Odia and Bengali besides Sanskrit. How many schools in Tamil Nadu are teaching Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam?
U Atreya Sarma, email

CSK dismay

Ref: *Not super kings anymore* (Apr 5). CSK's dismal performance so far has been due to a combination of factors. Weak and inconsistent bowling stands out, no matter how good the batting has been. Hopefully, M S Dhoni may be a morale booster for the team in the remaining matches.
D Sethuraman, Chennai

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POSTS OF THE DAY

Shivraj Singh Chouhan @ChouhanShivraj
On the birth anniversary of the great freedom fighter Jagjivan Ram, I offer my heartfelt tributes. Your service to the nation will always continue to inspire us.

Priyanka Gandhi Vadra @priyankagandhi
Easter greetings to everyone. May love, compassion and kindness guide us through these difficult times. Easter reminds us that light overcomes darkness.

Akhilesh Yadav @yadavakhilesh
The 'Netaji Late Mulayam Singh Yadav Night Cricket Tournament Premier League Season 6' organised in Gonda was inaugurated today via video conferencing.

BJP wants to deny quota gains to OBC women: Cong

Manickam Tagore says new law will hurt interests of southern states

PREETHA NAIR @ New Delhi

A day after Prime Minister Modi said that Southern states wouldn't lose seats in the upcoming delimitation exercise, Congress whip in Lok Sabha and Tamil Nadu MP Manickam Tagore warned that the move could skew political representation and sideline key democratic processes.

The Centre's apparent shift towards advancing delimitation could be a strategic move to sidestep demands for OBC representation in the women's quota based on data from the proposed 2027 caste census, said Tagore.

Speaking exclusively to this paper, the Congress leader called for a broad consultation involving the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition, parties, and other stakeholders to arrive at a fair framework to ensure equitable representation for all regions.

The Congress party has consistently backed women's reservation and had, as early as 2023, urged the government to implement it immediately, he said. However, the government chose to tie the legislation to both delimitation and the census. "The government had earlier said the sequence would be census, delimitation, and women's quota. Now, they appear to be delinking the census, which raises serious questions. Because a caste-based census would provide clear data on the OBC population, it would lead to demands for fair representation of OBCs within the women's quota. BJP's hidden agenda is to deny the OBC women the right to have a reservation in Parliament. That's why they advanced the delimitation," he said.

Expressing concern over the proposed 50% increase in Lok Sabha seats, Tagore said the move could create an imbalance in representation, saying that while southern states may gain additional seats, their relative influence in Parliament could decline compared to northern states.

"It appears that the government is planning to increase the total number of seats in Parliament, possibly adding around 272 new seats to implement the women's quota. While we support women's reservation, the concern is about how these additional seats will be distributed. For example, Southern states together may get around 66 additional seats, while northern states could gain about 200 additional seats. So the concern is not just about losing seats, but about losing proportional influence and representation in Parliament. Not only the South, the western part of India, and the north eastern part also are at a great disadvantage", said the Congress leader.

Party slams special session timing on women's bill

Tagore also criticised the timing of the special session of Parliament to pass the women's bill, pointing out that it is being scheduled ahead of West Bengal and Tamil Nadu elections, potentially limiting the participation of the MPs from those seats. "The Business Advisory Committee was not informed about the special session. Why have Parliament and the Opposition not been kept in the loop?" he said.

More money for pharma, fertiliser, petrochem, but low usage: House panel

VISMAY BASU @ New Delhi

FOUR reports tabled in Parliament by the Standing Committee on Chemicals and Fertilisers in March point out that funds are rising for pharmaceuticals, petrochemicals and fertilisers but remain underutilised, even as the government expands schemes to reduce import dependence.

The pharmaceuticals action taken report notes that Budget Estimates rose from ₹2,244.15 crore in 2022–23 to ₹6,920.20 crore in 2025–26, yet allocations were reduced by 15–17% at the revised stage because infra schemes could not proceed on time. The department attributes this to delays in statutory clearances and slow uptake under production-linked incentive and bulk drug park schemes, which together account for 60% of total spending.

In the chemicals and petrochemicals sector, the report shows the department projected ₹199.76 crore for 2026–27, but received ₹185.72 crore after scrutiny by the finance ministry. The reduction is attributed partly to lower demand from autonomous institutions and the absence of one-off expenditures such as loans to PSUs in earlier years. The fertiliser report presents a contrasting picture of scale but not of structure.

Domestic production has expanded, with urea output rising from 239 lakh metric tonnes in 2018–19 to 307 lakh MT in 2024–25, while phosphatic and potassic output increased from 175 to 214 lakh metric tonnes over the same period. Yet the system continues to rely on imports for key inputs, and subsidies remain central to pricing and distribution.

Across the four reports, the committee identifies similar administrative bottlenecks. These include delays in tendering and weak coordination.

GIVEN SHORT SHRIFT

DEPARTMENT OF PHARMACEUTICALS (₹ CRORE)

YEAR	BE	RE	ACTUAL
2023–24	3,160.06	2,697.95	2,432.45
2024–25	4,089.95	3,387.96	3,170.23
2025–26	5,268.12	4,369.7	2,890

DEPARTMENT OF CHEMICALS & PETROCHEMICALS

2023–24	173.45	572.63	474.67
2024–25	259.11	261.99	256.38
2025–26	194.05	185.57	140.29

ACROSS FOUR REPORTS, THE COMMITTEE IDENTIFIES SIMILAR BOTTLENECKS, INCLUDING DELAYS IN TENDERING AND WEAK CO-ORDINATION

Budget estimates
Revised estimates
Actual expenditure

INSIDER TRACK

Kharge's better control in the party

In Mallikarjun Kharge's Congress, control now appears to rest more firmly with the top leadership. The Tamil Nadu candidate list has triggered unease, not only over exclusions but what it reveals. Though Rahul Gandhi was present during talks, Kharge took the final call. Leaders like Jothimani have voiced concerns that the state leadership appears disconnected from grassroots realities. Even those seen as close to Rahul are said to be unhappy. It isn't the first time Kharge has pushed his choice—Christopher Tilak's Rajya Sabha pick reportedly prevailed over the preferences of Rahul and Sonia, who backed Chella Kumar.

Dhaka posting sparks buzz

As relations between New Delhi and Dhaka improve, policy circles are asking who will be the next High Commissioner there. The idea of appointing a politician instead of a career diplomat has added interest. Arif Mohammad Khan's name is being mentioned, though nothing is confirmed. His recent departure from Bihar's Lok Bhavan had raised eyebrows, particularly as he was seen by some within BJP circles as having played a role in political developments involving CM Nitish Kumar. Some officials see his political background as useful for this sensitive role, while others are cautious. Other politicians' names are also being discussed.

Race for Delhi's top post

Two seasoned AGMUT cadre officers—Debashree Mukherjee (1991 batch) and Punya Salila Srivastava (1993 batch)—are in strong contention for Delhi's next Chief Secretary. Mukherjee, now Secretary in the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, is keen to return to the parent cadre, with her seniority working in her favour. Srivastava, currently Secretary in the Department of Health and Family Welfare, has built a solid profile through key roles in the Union government, including the Ministry of Home Affairs. Her experience in handling Centre–state coordination and complex administrative matters is seen as well-suited to Delhi's governance needs.

DGP choice nears closure

After years of temporary arrangements, Uttar Pradesh may soon appoint a permanent police chief. A new panel has been sent to the UPSC after earlier objections regarding updated guidelines and the Supreme Court's mandate. Now, the process depends on the Commission sending back a shortlist of three names for the final choice. The gap began when Mukul Goel was removed in 2022, and the post has been vacant since then. Since acting DGP Rajiv Krishna is among the 22 senior IPS officers on the list, the state government may finally choose him, sources said, noting that his tenure runs until June 2029, making him one of the strongest eligible candidates under Supreme Court norms.

Ground signals from Gorakhpur

Following UP CM Yogi Adityanath's visit to Singapore in February, bilateral engagement now appears to be moving at a more grounded level. Singapore's High Commissioner to India, Simon Wong, recently travelled to Gorakhpur—reportedly taking the Vande Bharat train from Lucknow, marking a first for the route. The visit, though low-key, drew some local attention. During his stay, he visited Ravi Rai's Children of Mother Earth Centre, a school and shelter for underprivileged children, and said he was impressed by the students. He also visited the Gorakhnath Mandir, adding a cultural touch to the trip.

Pathan's many vanishing acts

Electoral politics, it seems, can be a disorienting space for late entrants—especially those coming from very different fields. Perhaps it is best to take a cue from Yousuf Pathan, the former cricketer now a Trinamool Congress MP from Baharampur, who memorably unseated Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury. In a moment of disarming candour, Pathan recently remarked that reporters do not see him in Parliament, constituents do not spot him in the constituency, and even his family says he is missing at home. "Ab aap hi batao... main kahan jaata hoon phir?" he joked. One suspects he is around—just not always where everyone expects him to be.

Iran FM dials Jaishankar to push bilateral ties as US ratchets up rhetoric

Also holds talks with Qatar, UAE

This was the sixth round of talks between Jaishankar and Abbas since the war began. Jaishankar also held talks with Qatar's Foreign Minister Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani on the evolving situation in the region and discussed the situation with his UAE counterpart.

JAYANTH JACOB @ New Delhi

IRANIAN Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi spoke with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Sunday, as diplomatic outreach intensified amid escalating rhetoric from Washington.

"Received a call from Foreign Minister Araghchi of Iran. Discussed the present situation," Jaishankar said, marking their sixth conversation since the outbreak of the West Asia conflict on February 28. The Iranian Embassy in New Delhi said the two sides discussed "bilateral relations as well as regional and international developments", underscoring continued engagement.

This was the sixth conversation between the two leaders since the beginning of the war on February 28. The call came even as US President Donald Trump issued a stark ultimatum to Tehran. Speaking to Fox News shortly after a social media warning tied to an April 6 deadline, Trump said he believed a deal could be reached "by tomorrow," adding, "they are negotiating now."

However, he coupled that with a blunt threat: "If they don't make a deal, and fast, I'm considering blowing everything up and taking over the oil." Trump also indicated that Iranian negotiators had been granted limited amnesty to facilitate talks. The parallel tracks, intensifying diplomacy and escalating US pressure, are widely seen as the uncertain trajectory of the conflict.

Jaishankar also held talks with Qatar's Foreign Minister Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani on the evolving situation in the region and discussed the situation with his UAE counterpart.

Centre makes draft rules for control of coastal oil lumps

JITENDRA CHOUBEY @ New Delhi

THE Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change has released draft rules aimed at managing 'tar balls' to protect the coastline and marine environment from oil spills.

The proposal outlines responsibilities for states, district administrations, and various ministries and agencies to prevent oil spills and ensure their timely removal.

Tar balls are small, dark, sticky blobs of weathered oil that form in marine environments due to oil spills or natural seeps. They often accumulate on beaches and pose a danger to seabirds, fish, and marine animals, such as sea turtles, which may mistakenly ingest them, thinking they are food. India's western coast, particularly the area from Gujarat to Goa, is significantly affected by tar balls, especially during the seasonal period from April to September.

The draft rules, titled the Tar Balls Management Rules, 2026, aim to outline the responsibilities of the ministries involved in handling oil facilities. This includes the Defence Ministry, the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MPSW), and the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MPNG), in addition to the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), state governments, and district administrations.

The new rules assign responsibilities to state governments and district administrations for the environmentally sound management of tar balls. They propose the formation of State Level Crisis Management Groups under the National Oil Spill Disaster Contingency Plan (NOSDCP) established by the Indian Coast Guard (ICG). The state governments should declare pollution from tar balls in coastal areas a state disaster and take action under the Disaster Management Act. It is responsible for the treatment, storage, and disposal of tar balls.

The district administration will be responsible for the collection, handling, processing, and transportation of tar balls deposited along the district shoreline and must include tar ball management in the District Disaster Management Plan. The draft rules also assign responsibilities to the Defence Ministry and CPCB.

The ICG is tasked with implementing the NOSDCP to effectively manage oil spills and the formation of tar balls. The ICG will conduct regular aerial and surface surveillance for oil spills in Indian Exclusive Economic Zones and inform relevant stakeholders for necessary preparedness and response measures. Advanced technologies such as remotely operated vehicles and automated underwater vehicles may be utilised for detecting and managing underwater oil plumes during spill events.

'Job, travel choices making urban males obese'

KAVITA BAJELI-DATT @ New Delhi

DELHI, Kolkata and Chennai have emerged as hotspots for abdominal obesity in both men and women due to long hours in sedentary jobs, reliance on motorised transport and easy access to packaged foods, which have created environments that promote weight gain, said a new nationwide study.

Published in Nature-Scientific Reports, the study found that abdominal obesity is rising across the country, but not evenly. Instead, it follows a striking pattern shaped by geography and gender.

Based on data from over seven lakh people across 707 districts as per the National Family Health Survey 5 (2019-2021), the study also highlighted that more than half of women aged 15-49 (56.6%) and nearly half of men aged 15-54 (48.9%) in India have abdominal obesity, indicating an alarming trend with far reaching implications as non-communicable diseases such as diabetes and cardiovascular conditions are rising.

Led by the researchers from Health Systems Transformation Platform, New Delhi, the study uncovered striking geographic disparities. While northern states like Punjab, Haryana, Uttarakhand, J&K and Delhi have a high prevalence of abdominal obesity among both men and women, the picture is totally different in central India. In districts across Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan and parts of Maharashtra, relatively lower levels of abdominal obesity are reported. But this advantage may not last, the study said, adding that as towns expand and lifestyles change, these areas could soon follow the same path as the north.

The reason for abdominal weight among both men and women in northern states is basically because diets are increasingly rich in fats and refined carbohydrates. At the same time, physical labour has declined sharply, replaced by mechanisation and desk-based work. In some communities, a larger body size is still seen as a sign of prosperity. Eastern India presents a mixed picture. States such as Bihar and Jharkhand continue to show lower prevalence, largely due to persistent poverty and undernutrition.

This is also beginning to change. Urban pockets in West Bengal and Odisha are already showing rising levels of abdominal obesity, pointing to shifting diets and lifestyles. "This coexistence of undernutrition and obesity—often within the same region—is becoming one of India's biggest public health challenges," the researchers said.

The analysis revealed distinct gender patterns across regions. While southern states like Kerala show higher prevalence of abdominal obesity among women, certain districts in Telangana and UP report higher rates among men.

56.6% of women and **48.9%** of men in India have abdominal obesity

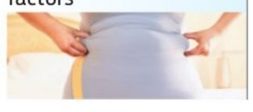
Delhi, Kolkata, and Chennai are major hotspots for abdominal obesity

NORTHERN STATES SHOW HIGH PREVALENCE IN BOTH MEN AND WOMEN

Central India currently has lower rates but is at rising risk

Eastern India shows mixed trends with urban areas seeing increases

Women are more affected than men due to biological and social factors



Top court orders couple to keep joint custody of son till Canada court rules

SUCHITRA KALYAN MOHANTY @ New Delhi

TAKING into consideration the interest of the child in a matrimonial dispute case, the Supreme Court recently directed both a couple to share the custody of their son till the father (petitioner) approaches the Canadian court seeking modification of its earlier order.

"Liberty is given to the petitioner (husband-Shripal Shah) to seek variation of the order passed by the concerned Canadian court. Till such time, both respondent No. 1 (wife- Tillana Shah) and the petitioner shall have shared custody by way of an interim arrangement, without prejudice to the contention of the parties on merit, pursuant to the application to be filed by the petitioner before the concerned Canadian Court," a bench of Justices M M Sundresh and N Kotiswar Singh said. As per the case details, Shripal and Tillana got married in Canada in 2018, and in 2020, the son was born in Canada, and the child got an OCI (Overseas Citizen of India) card as per the consent of both parties. During Covid (May 2020-April 2022), the couple and their child remained in their Canadian home. Soon after that marital discord started. Following which, the mother moved the

Canadian court and then the Gujarat HC. For the father, senior advocate Anil Malhotra appeared in the Gujarat HC and Supreme Court.

The SC, however, did not interfere with Gujarat's HC's judgement, which had said that it would be open for the father to approach the Canadian court before whom the proceedings are pending for resolution of his disputes, including his right to secure visitation/custody of the child. "We do not find any ground to interfere with the order passed by the HC on merit," the SC said. While disposing of the SLP filed by the father, the SC clarified that the mother can move the Gujarat HC for the release of the child's passport and the OCI card.

We do not find any ground to interfere with the order passed in the case by the Gujarat High Court on merit

Supreme Court

DECEPTION

A case has been registered against five persons for allegedly cheating a trader from Maharashtra's Thane district of ₹30 lakh on the pretext of offering a dealership of herbal liquor products, police said.

3 MILITANTS HELD IN EAST & WEST IMPHAL DISTS OF MANIPUR

INDIA	Max	Min		Max	Min
Ahmedabad	39	23	Mumbai	31	26
Bhopal	37	21	Panaji	32	25
Jaipur	36	19	Patna	36	21
Amritsar	34	19	Lucknow	36	20
Chennai	34	25	Port Blair	31	26
Kolkata	35	24	Imphal	22	15
Srinagar	04	-4	Chandigarh	37	18

Mamata says BJP orchestrated protests during Amit Shah's Bhabanipur roadshow • Lok Sabha LoP says Assam land of different religions

'No one safe in Bengal': PM blames Didi for attack on judicial officers

SUBHENDU MAITI @ Kolkata

LAUNCHING a blistering attack on the Mamata Banerjee government on 'lawlessness' in West Bengal, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said the gherao of seven judicial officers, including three women, in Malda district was a proof of 'maha jungleraj' of the Trinamool Congress.

Addressing an election rally in Cooch Behar in north Bengal, Modi used the Malda incident to sharpen the BJP's twin campaign planks of "poor law and order" and alleged demographic change, besides the issues of safety of women and infiltration from Bangladesh, to attack the TMC.

"Just a few days ago, the entire nation witnessed judicial officers being held hostage in Malda. What kind of government is this, where judges and constitutional procedures are not safe? We cannot expect such a government to keep the people of Bengal safe," Modi said. The PM was referring to Wednesday night's incident in Malda's Kaliachak-II block office, where seven judicial officers were gheraoed for several hours by a mob during hearings on names marked ""under adjudication" in the draft electoral rolls prepared during the SIR exercise. "What happened in Malda is an example of TMC's maha jungleraj," he said, alleging that the ruling party was "bent on carrying out the funeral procession of law and order" in the state.

"The attacks were made with provocations of the TMC to destabilise the judges mentally. It was an attempt to throttle the Constitution," Modi said. With directive of the EC, the NIA has started inquiry into the Malda incident.

On the same day, Chief Minister Banerjee raised her campaign pitch on the suspension four police officials over clashes between TMC and BJP workers during Union Home Minister Amit Shah's road show in Bhabanipur where leader of opposition Suvendu Adhikari is contesting against her. Addressing a rally at Jiaganj in Murshidabad, the TMC chief alleged that the BJP had brought outsiders and organised trouble in Bhabanipur. "It was a planned attack. They spat on my poster. Locals protested against unruly behaviour of BJP," she said.

Modi sought to frame the contest in binary terms. "On one side, there is the 'bhay' (fear) of the TMC, and on the other side, you have the BJP's 'bharosa' (trust). On one side is the fear of TMC's corruption, and on the other is the BJP which accelerates development," he said. He also contrasted the fear of infiltration and settling foreigners in Bengal with the BJP's confidence in stopping infiltration and driving infiltrators out.

Referring to the row over the revision of electoral rolls, Modi said, "The TMC is opposing SIR and the CAA to protect infiltrators. The TMC does not want Hindu refugees to get citizenship, and that is why it is opposing CAA."

In Murshidabad, Banerjee urged people to cast votes to "take revenge" for deletion of names from the rolls.

PM Modi with party leaders during a public meeting in Cooch Behar, West Bengal on Sunday | PTI

'BJP won't project any CM face for Bengal'

Amid speculations on the BJP's chief ministerial face in the West Bengal assembly polls, state BJP president Samik Bhattacharya said the party had not taken any decision on the matter and would instead seek votes in the name of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Bhattacharya said the BJP did not distinguish between "organic" and "inorganic" leaders, and that "whoever the people identify as fighters against the TMC's misrule can be the party's face after it wins the polls". Pitching the assembly polls as the BJP's direct battle against Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and the TMC's "appeasement politics", Bhattacharya asserted that the party would not project any CM face, and would instead seek votes in the name of Modi, and also pursue a policy of "detect, detain and deport" against infiltrators if voted to power. However Bhattacharya declined to give a direct reply on whether the BJP's decision to field Leader of Opposition Suvendu Adhikari from both Nandigram and Bhabanipur amounted to projecting him as the party's chief ministerial candidate.

Cong unites like Zubeen, says Rahul, calls Himanta 'India's most corrupt CM'

PRASANTA MAZUMDAR @ Guwahati

CONGRESS leader Rahul Gandhi on Sunday likened his party's philosophy to that of music icon Zubeen Garg.

Addressing people at election rallies in Assam's Biswanath and Golaghat, he attacked CM Himanta Biswa Sarma for the second time in three days, calling him the "most corrupt" chief minister of the country.

"Zubeen Garg Ji worked all his life to unite Assam. He never misbehaved with anyone, nor did he intimidate. This is Assam's culture. The philosophy of the Congress is also like that – to spread love against hatred," Gandhi said.

He further stated that no big leaders of Assam ever attempted to divide the state or spread hatred, and they lived their lives fostering love.

Attacking Sarma for allegedly fanning hatred, the Congress leader said Assam is a land of different communities and religions, and its strength lies in love and brotherhood.

Gandhi reiterated his "land ATM" jibe, alleging that the Assam government is giving away land to a few industrialists. "Whenever they need land, he (Sarma) will give it on some pretext or the other. However, it is not given for free. They give money and provide support," Gandhi claimed.

He urged people not to believe in the BJP's "lies" and asked the gathering if it had granted the ST status to the six communities – Tai Ahom, Moran, Matak, Chutia, Koch-Rajbongshi, and Adivasi (Tea Tribes) – or increased the daily wage of tea plantation workers to ₹ 350 as allegedly promised during the last elections.

"They lie whenever they want, and it doesn't make any difference to them. But I have not come here to tell lies. We will give ST status to the six communities and a daily wage of ₹450 to the tea garden workers," Gandhi said. He reiterated that the Congress would fulfil the five guarantees as mentioned in its poll manifesto.

'My wife and I will take action within the next 48 hours'

The CM said he and his wife would file criminal and civil defamation cases against Khera within the next 48 hours, stating that he would be held accountable for his statements. "I have complete faith in judiciary. Once the truth is established, Pawan Khera will face the consequences," he said.

Cong accuses CM of hiding wife's assets, Sarma threatens to sue Khera

PRASANTA MAZUMDAR @ Guwahati

CONGRESS leader Pawan Khera on Sunday stoked a controversy by claiming that Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma's wife Riniki Bhuyan Sarma possesses passports of three countries, including two Islamic nations, owns luxury properties in Dubai and has investments worth several lakh crore rupees in the US.

Sarma dismissed the claims and threatened to file defamation cases against Khera.

Addressing a press conference in Delhi, Khera said his claims were based on documents received from reliable sources abroad. He claimed that such a revelation against a sitting CM and his family had never occurred in the political history of independent India.

Khera claimed that one of the three passports is a 'Golden Card' issued in Abu Dhabi, UAE, on March 14, 2022, which is valid till March 13, 2027. "The second is a passport from Antigua and Barbuda, issued on August 26, 2021, valid till August 25, 2031. The third is a passport from Egypt, issued on February 13, 2022, valid till February 12, 2029," he said. Khera urged Union Home Minister Amit Shah to clarify whether an SIT would be constituted.

Sarma said the press conference by Khera reflected the deep frustration and panic within the Congress. "As Assam moves towards a historic mandate, such desperate attacks only expose their sinking ground. These are malicious, fabricated, and politically motivated lies aimed at misleading the people," Sarma said.

₹16,625 CRORE MINERAL REVENUE IN 2025–26

ON SCORE

14% year-on-year growth, double five-year CAGR

- Plans to digitize minor minerals, expand drone and VTS monitoring
- Private exploration simplified; tenders issued for licences
- Home to 29 rare minerals, including critical rare-earth elements

'Khanij 2.0' and tech boost efficiency, curb leakages

C'garh mineral revenue hits around ₹17K crore in near perfect target

EJAZ KAISER @ Raipur

THE Chhattisgarh government has achieved a milestone in the mining sector through technical innovation and robust management. The state remains naturally a resource-rich state with huge reserves of minerals.

With the tech-driven transparency the state generated ₹16,625 crore in mineral revenue, achieving 98% of its annual target for the financial year 2025–26, officials said.

"Chhattisgarh recorded a 14% year-on-year increase in mineral revenue. This figure is more than double the average Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 6 per cent observed over the previous five years," said P Dayanand, secretary, Mineral Resources Department.

Officials attribute this surge to successful policy implementation and a strong monitoring framework established under the current administration's "Good Governance" initiative.

The record-breaking revenue is credited to strategic interventions. Effective optimisation of dispatch routes for NMDC and other Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs), implementation of 'Khanij 2.0' (an IT-based platform that has significantly improved operational efficiency and oversight), and use of technology to curb leakages and streamline transport.

In the current financial year, the state government plans to integrate minor minerals into the 'Khanij 2.0' platform to create a fully digital and unified mining ecosystem, besides deploying drone-based surveillance on a wider scale to further strengthen the monitoring of mineral transportation with expanded use of Vehicle Tracking Systems.

"The goal of the Chhattisgarh government is to ensure sustainable revenue growth while maintaining efficiency and accountability in mineral resource management," said CM Vishnu Deo Sai.

Nitish in RS on Apr 10, BJP to lead Bihar

RAMASHANKAR @ Patna

BIHAR Chief Minister and JD(U) president Nitish Kumar will take oath as a Rajya Sabha member on April 10, paving the way for formation of a new government in the state, Bihar BJP president Sanjay Saraogi said on Sunday.

Talking to media persons, Saraogi said that Nitish Kumar, who was elected as a Rajya Sabha member on March 16, will take oath as a member of Upper House of Parliament on April 10. Later, top leaders of BJP and NDA constituents will decide its leader, who will be selected as CM, he added.

On Wednesday, a meeting of the state cabinet has been called, which will be the last meeting to be held under Nitish's chief ministership. On March 30, Nitish resigned from membership of the Bihar Legislative Council after being elected to the Rajya Sabha.

"This will be Nitish's last cabinet meeting," a senior BJP leader said. Nitish has also convened a meeting of JD(U) leaders on April 6 before leaving for New Delhi on April 9.

Sources said that JD(U) leaders will discuss the party's future strategy after the resignation of Nitish Kumar as CM and its role in the new cabinet headed by a BJP chief minister. Nitish will resign from the CM's post after his return from Delhi. According to BJP insiders, Nitish is likely to resign from CM's post on April 12, while a meeting of BJP and NDA leaders will be held on April 14. The new government will be formed after the NDA legislative party meeting. "Everything has been finalised. It is just a formality, and the name of the next CM will be announced soon," they said.

Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Kumar Sinha, who is also the state's revenue and land reforms department minister in the Nitish cabinet, however, tried to downplay the speculation about the next CM. "We have an NDA government in Bihar, and it will continue. In the NDA there is not any big or young brother.

"Brother is a brother," he told the media. Sinha, however, denied being in the race for the CM's post. He admitted that Nitish Kumar will be taken into confidence while finalising his successor's name. He also asked the media not to be worried about it. "NDA leaders will decide the name of Nitish Kumar's successor at an appropriate time," he said.

2-km wildlife fence up for suveillance ahead of Ardh Kumbh in Haridwar

NARENDRA SETHI @ Dehradun

WITH the Ardh Kumbh Mela set to commence in Haridwar in early 2027, the Uttarakhand Forest Department is taking proactive steps to ensure the safety of pilgrims and sadhus from potential wildlife intrusions.

Authorities have announced the construction of a two-kilometre patrolling track aimed at preventing animals like elephants and leopards from straying into the Bairagi Camp area, where religious congregations and ascetic camps are scheduled to be established.

The region around the Bairagi Camp is known to be on the fringes of wildlife movement corridors. Frequently visited by herds of elephants, leopards, deer, and blue bulls, the area often witnesses human-wildlife conflict, particularly involving elephants foraging in nearby agricultural fields.

"To mitigate these risks, a budget of ₹40.99 lakh has been approved from the Kumbh Mela Fund to construct a dedicated patrolling track using RBM (River Bed Material) along the Ganga riverbank, stretching up to the Najibabad bridge," an official close to the Mela authority confirmed.

"A two-kilometre track will be constructed along the Ganga bank to restrict wildlife movement near the Kumbh Mela zone," said Shishpal Singh, Ranger, Haridwar Forest Division. "Once the track is ready, our forest teams will be deployed for 24-hour surveillance to monitor animal activity."

The department plans to maintain a constant vigil throughout the duration of the fair. Should any animal breach the perimeter, specialised teams equipped with tranquilliser guns will be on standby to safely relocate the wildlife back into the forest. Beyond the Kumbh, the department intends to utilise the track as a permanent patrol route to bolster long-term forest management and anti-poaching efforts.

This initiative follows a tense incident during the 2021 Kumbh Mela, when a wild elephant strayed into the populated zone under the cover of darkness. It took a massive, hours-long operation by forest officials to drive the animal back.

3 detained from madrasa with firearm, SIT probe on

RAMASHANKAR @ Patna

THREE individuals have been taken into custody from a madrasa with a firearm at Gawandra village under Chakia police station limits in Bihar's East Champaran district.

Police conducted raids at the madrasa following an intelligence input and detained three individuals with a country-made pistol and live cartridges. Police are conducting a probe to ascertain the source of the weapons and the specific purpose for which they were kept at the madrasa, known as the Islamia madrasa.

Swarna Prabhat, superintendent of police (SP), East Champaran, confirmed the police operation and said that a special investigation team (SIT) has also been constituted.

The madrasa in question has been suspected of indulging in unlawful activities for a long time, alleged a local resident, Asgar Ali.

Meanwhile, SP Swarn Prabhat said that police acted after a specific tip-off. He said that three individuals had been taken into custody for questioning. Preliminary probe has revealed that the premises were used for the buying and selling of weapons. Efforts are underway to verify the antecedents of individuals detained, the SP added.

Police are investigating whether the individuals have any connections to the Popular Front of India (PFI).

GUWAHATI DIARY

PRASANTA MAZUMDAR

Our correspondent in Guwahati

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NFR achieves milestones, boosts connectivity

The Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) has achieved significant milestones during the 2025-26 fiscal year, with enhanced connectivity, modernisation, passenger comfort and regional development across the region. It introduced 20 pairs of new train services, including premium, semi-premium and conventional trains, strengthening connectivity. "NFR increased the speed of 35 trains, resulting in a cumulative saving of 675 minutes in travel time. Simultaneously, the railway made notable progress with 100% electrification, contributing to Indian Railways' mission of sustainable and energy-efficient operations," NFR's CPRO said.

Workshop for environ awareness in students

To foster environmental awareness among students, well-known biodiversity conservation organisation Aaranyak, in collaboration with the Assam Pollution Control Board and Samagra Shiksha Assam, Kamrup Metro, conducted a four-day workshop titled "Shiksha for Science and Environment" at a school in the city. The initiative aligns with the Government of India's Mission LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment) that promotes environmentally responsible behaviour by integrating sustainability practices into school education to address rising pollution and climate change challenges. The workshop featured four sessions.

IIT-G researchers develop energy-efficient bricks

Researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati (IIT-G) have developed energy-efficient bricks designed to keep buildings naturally cool, offering a promising solution for sustainable construction. The findings of this research have been published in the prestigious Journal of Energy Storage. "In modern architecture, most infrastructures rely on air conditioning systems to maintain indoor temperatures, especially during the summer. While these systems are effective, they consume substantial electricity and contribute significantly to carbon emissions and environmental degradation," the IIT Guwahati said in a statement.

3 killed
as high winds topple a tree on an Easter egg hunt in Germany

GLOBAL WEATHER

LR: Light Rain • HR: Heavy Rain • LS: Light Snow • TDS: Thundershower • LC: Light Cloud • SNY: Sunny

Beijing	21	1	SNY	Los Angeles	20	12	SNY
Colombo	28	24	SNY	Melbourne	26	15	LC
Dhaka	31	19	SNY	Moscow	4	2	SNY
Dubai	26	21	SNY	New York	7	2	SNY
Houston	31	19	TDS	Singapore	28	25	TDS
Istanbul	33	21	SNY	Toronto	1	-5	SNY
London	13	9	SNY	Washington	3	-2	SNY

Warns of strikes on power plants, bridges as Hormuz deadline looms, even as talks continue; past deadlines slipped amid deadly war hitting civilians, markets

TRUMP UPS THREAT, SETS HORMUZ 'HELL' DEADLINE

War disrupts global aid supply chains

TEL AVIV: Aid groups warn the West Asia war has disrupted food and medicine supply chains worldwide, with key routes like Hormuz hit. Rising fuel and insurance costs have delayed shipments and cut deliveries. The UN calls it the worst disruption since Covid-19. With aid strained, experts warn prolonged war could deepen hunger and delay lifesaving aid.

Nepal cuts work week over fuel crisis

KATHMANDU: Nepal will shift to a five-day work week for civil servants and schools from this week to cope with fuel shortages linked to the war. Offices will run Monday to Friday. The country, reliant on Indian fuel imports, faces rising costs, shortages and emergency measures to curb consumption and reduce demand.

Air India halts Tel Aviv flights till May 31

JERUSALEM: Air India has suspended Delhi–Tel Aviv flights till May 31 amid the West Asia conflict, leaving over 40,000 Indians in Israel facing travel hurdles. With most airlines halting operations, many must exit via Jordan or Egypt. The Indian mission is assisting evacuations and maintaining emergency support for citizens.

Pope urges peace amid war turmoil

VATICAN CITY: Pope Leo XIV urged world leaders to "choose peace" in his first Easter address as war engulfed the West Asia. He warned of growing indifference to violence. Celebrations were subdued across the region, with restricted access to holy sites, cancelled masses and communities marking Easter under the shadow of conflict.

WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump on Sunday made new, expletive-laden threats to escalate strikes on Iran and its infrastructure if it doesn't open the Strait of Hormuz by his deadline, after American forces rescued an aviator whose Iran-downed plane fell behind enemy lines.

In a social media post, Trump promised strikes on Iran's power plants and bridges and said the country would be "living in Hell" if the strait, a crucial waterway for global trade, isn't opened to marine traffic by Tuesday. He ended with "Praise be to Allah."

Hours later, in a cryptic Truth Social post reading "Tuesday, 8:00 P.M. Eastern Time!", Trump appeared to signal a one-day extension of his deadline for Iran, with the timing corresponding to Wednesday 3.30 am in Tehran, giving it more time to respond or face threatened strikes on key infrastructure.

Trump has issued such deadlines before but extended them when mediators have claimed progress toward ending the war, which has killed thousands, shaken global markets, cut off key shipping routes and spiked fuel prices in just over five weeks. Both sides have threatened and hit civilian targets like oil fields and desalination plants critical for drinking water, bringing warnings of possible war crimes.

"Iranian civilians will be the first to suffer from the destruction of power plants and bridges," Amnesty International head Agnes Callamard said on social media, calling Trump's threat "revolting."

A woman holds Iran's national flag while standing near a billboard with a sentence reading 'The Strait of Hormuz remains closed' at the Enqelab Square in Tehran | AFP

Diplomatic efforts continue

Trump's earlier deadline of 9pm EDT Monday (0100 GMT Tuesday), centers on growing alarm over Iran's grip on the Strait of Hormuz, critical for shipments of oil and gas from the Persian Gulf to Europe and Asia. It's also key for delivering humanitarian supplies. Some ships have paid Iran for passage. Diplomatic efforts continued.

Oman's Foreign Ministry said that deputy foreign ministers and experts from Iran and Oman met to discuss proposals to ensure "smooth transit" through the strait. Oman has often served as a mediator between the US and Iran.

Egypt said that Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty had spoken by phone with US envoy Steve Witkoff and Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, as well as with Turkish and Pakistani counterparts who are helping to mediate.

Pakistan's Foreign Ministry said it had conveyed to Araghchi that Islamabad supports "all efforts aimed at de-escalation." Islamabad has said that it would soon host talks between the US and Iran.

An escalation, however, could see Iranian-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen resuming attacks on vessels in the Bab el-Mandeb strait, a key waterway to and from the Suez Canal.

Iran strikes Gulf energy sites

In Kuwait, Iranian drone attacks caused significant damage to power plants and a petrochemical plant. They also put a water desalination station out of service, according to the Ministry of Electricity.

In Bahrain, a drone attack caused a fire at one of the national oil company's storage facilities and a state-run petrochemical plant, the kingdom's official news agency said.

In the United Arab Emirates, authorities responded to fires at a petrochemical plant in Ruwais that they said were caused by intercepted debris, halting operations. *AP*

SHIFTING DEADLINES

US President Donald Trump has repeatedly reset deadlines for Iran over reopening the Strait of Hormuz
HERE IS THE DEADLINE TIMELINE:

March 21: Warned of strikes on Iranian power plants within 48 hours if the waterway was not reopened, saying the US would "hit and obliterate" key infrastructure

March 23: Claimed "very good and productive" talks and deferred planned strikes on energy infrastructure by five days

March 27: Said action would be delayed by 10 days at Iran's request, effectively pushing the deadline to April 6

April 4: With the deadline nearing, issued a fresh 48-hour warning, threatening severe retaliation

April 5: Reiterated the threat in a strongly-worded, expletive-laden social media post, warning of imminent strikes

Zelenskyy fears Wasia war may cut US support

ISTANBUL

UKRAINIAN President Volodymyr Zelenskyy expressed concern that a prolonged US-Israeli war on Iran could further erode America's support for Ukraine as Washington's global priorities shift and Kyiv braces for reduced deliveries of critically needed Patriot air defense missiles.

Ukraine desperately needs more US-made Patriot air defense systems to help it counter Russia's daily barrages, Zelenskyy said, speaking to The Associated Press in an exclusive interview late Saturday in Istanbul.

Russia's sustained strikes on cities since its invasion have killed thousands and hit energy systems, disrupting industry and cutting heat and water.

Zelenskyy warned Ukraine is "not the priority" and fears a prolonged Iran war could reduce support. *AP*

Israeli strikes pound Beirut; main Lebanon-Syria crossing targeted

First responders search for survivors at the site of an Israeli strike in Jnah neighbourhood of Beirut | AFP

BEIRUT

ISRAELI strikes on south Beirut and its suburbs killed at least four people on Sunday, a day after Israel threatened to hit Lebanon's main border crossing with Syria, forcing it to close.

The Israeli military also carried out deadly attacks on Lebanon's south, one of which killed seven people including a family of six. Israel has launched airstrikes across Lebanon as well as a ground invasion in the south since March 2, when armed group Hezbollah entered the war in the West Asia on the side of its backer Iran.

Hezbollah on Sunday claimed to have fired a cruise missile at an Israeli warship off the coast, but the Israeli military told AFP it was "not aware" of such an incident. One of Israel's strikes in Beirut on Sunday killed at least four people and wounded 39 in the Jnah neighbourhood, the Lebanese health ministry said. It landed about 100 metres away from the Rafik Hariri University Hospital, the largest public medical facility in Lebanon, a medical source told AFP.

Another attack struck a building elsewhere in the area that the Israeli military had warned it would target.

Israel also launched several strikes on the nearby southern suburbs, an area now largely evacuated but where Hezbollah holds sway.

The military said it had begun striking Hezbollah sites and would target Lebanon's Masnaa crossing, a key gateway to Syria. *AFP*

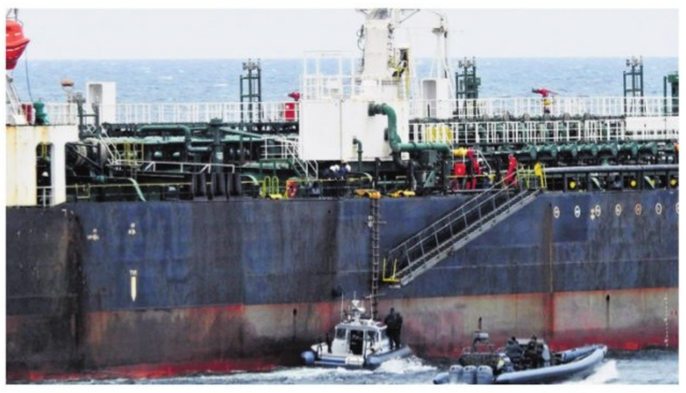
Sweden frees EU-sanctioned tanker after finding no proof in oil spill probe

FRANKFURT

SWEDISH authorities have released a tanker sanctioned by the European Union that had been boarded and detained on suspicion of causing an oil spill in the Baltic Sea.

The Swedish Coast Guard said they had not found sufficient evidence that the Flora 1 tanker was at fault for the 12-kilometer-long spill that had been discovered Thursday.

Investigators also established that Cameroon had confirmed the vessel was sailing under that country's flag, which had not been clear when the vessel and its 24-member crew was stopped Friday, the coast guard said. The Flora 1 was put on the EU's list of sanctioned vessels for carrying Russian oil while "practicing irregular and high-risk shipping practices." Unsafe practices can include turning off the automatic tracking system that transmits the vessel's location to other ships.



Swedish Coast Guard personnel board tanker suspected of causing an oil spill | AP

The sanctions are aimed at the "shadow fleet" that emerged in response to a price cap on Russian oil imposed by the Group of Seven democracies to limit the revenues that fund Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The cap was enforced by barring insurance and shipping companies from handling oil above the cap. The fleet is made up of aging tankers with ownership and insurance based in countries that are not observing the price cap. *AP*

Bangladesh suspects measles killed 98 children in 3 weeks, ramps up vaccination drive

DHAKA

BANGLADESH said it suspected measles killed at least 98 children in the past three weeks, official data showed Sunday, with Dhaka ramping up vaccination efforts in the worst-affected areas.

Last week, Prime Minister Tarique Rahman directed two senior ministers to travel across the South Asian nation of 170 million people in an effort to assess the scale of the crisis to help coordinate a response. Health ministry data released on Sunday showed that children aged between six months and five years old with suspected measles symptoms soared to 6,476.

"Compared with past years, the number of affected children is higher, and the death toll is higher too," Halimur Rashid, director at the Communicable Disease Control, told AFP referring to the number in suspected cases. The largest number of suspected cases on record was in 2005 at 25,934, according to World Health Organization (WHO) data, though that number had significantly declined until this year.

Rashid attributed the potential outbreak to "multifactorial causes, including a shortage of vaccines". Confirmed numbers of measles cases among the demographic stand at 826, with only 16 deaths, with experts saying in many cases, testing is either not done or patients die before testing can be done. Measles is one of the world's most contagious diseases, according to the WHO, and is transmitted when a person coughs or sneezes. *AFP*

Congo joins US third-country deportation programme

KINSHASA: Congo will receive some migrants as part of a new deal under the Trump administration's third-country programme, its government said Sunday, the latest such African nation to receive migrants being deported from the United States The deportees will start arriving in Congo this month, the Congolese Ministry of Communications said in a statement, without further details on the date or the number of deportees expected. It described the arrangement as a "temporary" one that reflects Congo's "commitment to human dignity and international solidarity." It would come with zero costs to the government with the US covering the needed logistics, it said. The US has struck such third-country deportation deals with at least seven other African nations, many of them among countries hit the most by the Trump administration's policies that have restricted trade, aid and migration. AP

CULTURAL TREASURE

A 200-year-old Hindu scripture steps out of Oxford's archives to meet devotees across UK

LONDON

THE University of Oxford's Bodleian Libraries has launched a historic UK-wide tour of 'Shikshapatri', one of the world's most significant and rare Hindu scriptures, to mark its 200th anniversary.

The sacred manuscript began its bicentenary journey earlier this year to travel to major temples around the country in collaboration with leaders of the Swaminarayan faith to offer an expected 20,000-30,000 people a rare opportunity to view the sacred text.

Composed in Vadtal in Gujarat in 1826 by Sahajananda Swami - Lord Swarminarayan, the 'Shikshapatri' - or "a letter of teachings" - is devised as a guide to ethical and spiritual living. "By sharing this historic manuscript with temples and communities across the UK, the Bodleian Libraries hope to honour both its cultural significance and its enduring message," said Dr Gillian Evison, Keeper of Asian and West Asiaern Collections at the Bodleian. "Two centuries after it was first written, the 'Shikshapatri's' call for compassion, ethical living and social harmony continues to resonate in an increasingly complex world," he said.

People offer prayers as confetti is showered during the display of the original manuscript of Shikshapatri at a temple, in London | PTI

Said to have been written on the "fifth day of the bright half of the month", the manuscript contains 212 Sanskrit shlokas that distil key principles from Hindu scriptures. Recited daily by Swaminarayan followers, the text has been printed millions of times globally.

The Bodleian claims its manuscript holds historical significance as one of the oldest known copies of the text provided by the author himself.

Oxford University said the manuscript, gifted by Sahajananda Swami to Sir John Malcolm in 1830, holds significance and offered ethical guidance during colonial upheaval. *PTI*

ASIA MATTERS

3 NATIONS SEEK UREA IMPORTS, SAYS AGRI MIN

Three nations have sought urea imports as the Strait of Hormuz closure disrupts global supply chains, Agriculture Minister Andi Amran Sulaiman said. Talks are ongoing, with better pricing expected. Authorities said domestic fertilizer stocks are secure after early procurement of raw materials. Exports will proceed only after meeting local demand, with output capacity exceeding 8.8 million tonnes. Despite global price spikes, strong domestic supply has shielded markets. The move is seen as part of efforts to support agriculture while aiding countries facing shortages.

NO WATER RATIONING, GOVT DENIES CLAIMS

Authorities denied viral claims of water rationing, saying supply remains stable despite lower raw water levels due to hot weather. Measures include optimising treatment plants, using ponds and lakes, and reducing leaks. Officials urged prudent use, warned against rumours, and assured continuous monitoring to maintain supply.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the general public that my client **V. VENKATESH** S/o late Venkatappa D, aged about 79 years, residing at Gangasandra, Kadaba Hobli, Gubbi Taluk, Tumkur District by notice has revoked and cancelled the General Power of Attorney which was registered as Document No.GBB-4-00632/2024-25, dated 09.12.2024 in Book-4 before the Sub-Registrar, Tumkur (GUBBI) in favour of Sri. Harsha G. S/o. Gangaraju V. R/at No.11, 4th Cross, K.V.Temple Road, Shanthi Layout Main Road, Ramamurthy Nagar, Bengaluru -560016.
Any person/s intend to deal with the Schedule Property with G. Harsha will not be binding on my client, as the GPA executed in favour of G. Harsha has been legally revoked and cancelled.

SCHEDULE

All the piece and parcel of the immoveable property being agricultural land bearing Sy.No.133, measuring 3 Acres 30 guntas, situated at Kadaba Village, Kadaba Hobli, Gubbi Taluk, Tumkur District.

R. VICKRAMADITAN Advocate
No.201, 1ST Floor, 2nd Cross, Jakkasandra Extn Koramangala 1st Block, Bangalore -560034.
Mob.No. 9448448217

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public are informed that My client Sri. Aswath. M S/o Late K.Muniyappa, residing at No.136, 8th Cross, 19th Main, 2nd Phase, J.P Nagar Bangalore-560078, is the absolute owner in possession of the property bearing No.1 formed in Sy.No.33, situated at Puttenahalli Village, Uttarahalli Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, Bengaluru, presently within the revenue jurisdiction of BBMP measuring East to West 37 feet and North to South 40 feet in all measuring 1480 Sq.ft and bounded on:- East by : Property belonging to Muniyamma, West by : Property bearing No.2, North by : Road, South by : Property bearing No.17.
My client has misplaced/lost the original Registered Gift Deed dated 08.11.2002 bearing Document No.13901 of Book I stored in CD No.105 in the Office of the Sub-Registrar, Kengeri, pertaining to the above -mentioned property, during transit on 27.03.2026 between 3.pm and 5.pm at Achyappa Layout ,Puttenhalli Bangalore. Despite my client's diligent and repeated efforts to trace the said original documents, the same could not be found, consequently, my client has lodged a complaint before Puttenahalli Police Station dated 30.03.2026 and has received an acknowledgment bearing Reference No. LPT No.337/2026. In connection herewith.
In the event that anyone finds or is in possession of the above-mentioned document, they are requested to kindly hand over the same at the aforesaid address

G. Lakshmi Narayana Prasad, Advocate
#84/85 Raj and Raj Associates,
Cubbonpet Main Rd, Bengaluru - 560002.

IN THE COURT OF THE XVI ADDL. CITY CIVIL AND SESSIONS JUDGE, AT BENGALURU (CCH-12)
O.S. No. 1969/2026

BETWEEN : 1. Sri. Ragesh Raghavan Residing at No 2064, Tower-2 Habitat Illuminar apartment Myilsandra, Kengeri Bangalore South Bengaluru-560059 Managing Committee Member Habitat Illuminar Owners Association
2. Sri. Srinath Reddy B V S/o B R Venkataramana Reddy Residing at, 3112 / Tower 3/Habitat Iluminar, Mysore Road Mylasandra, Kengerihobli Bangalore South Bengaluru-560059 Managing Committee Member Habitat Illuminar Owners Association
3. Sri. V Raghavendra Kadam Residing at, Vittal Rao Kadam Habitat Iluminar, Tower-4 Floor 5 Flat 04054, Survey No 49/149/2A 2B Mailasandra, Near Kengeri Metro Station Bengaluru 560059 Managing Committee Member Habitat Illuminar Owners Association **4. Sandip Rath** Residing at, Flat #5074 Habitat Iluminar Mylasandra, Bangalore 560059 Managing Committee Member Habitat Illuminar Owners Association
5. Sri. JagadeeshwaragoudaGoudappagoudar S/o Shivanagouda Residing at, No 49/1,49/2A,49/2B Mylasandra Village, Kengeri Hobli Bangalore South Bengaluru, Karnataka 560060 Managing Committee Member Habitat Illuminar Owners Association
6. Sri. Sarvesh K Shetti S/o Keshav S Shetti Residng at, 08052, Tower & Habitat Iluminar Apartment, RV Vidyanikethan Near Mysore Road, Mylasandra Kengeri, Bengaluru - 560059 Managing Committee Member Habitat Illuminar Owners Association
7. Sri. BR Mohan Kumar Residing at, No 9032 Habitat Iluminar Apartment R V Vidyanikethan Road Near Kengeri, Mailasandra VTC: R V Niketan Bengaluru 560059 Managing Committee Member Habitat Illuminar Owners Association
8. Sri. Supreeth Chandrashekar Residing at, Habitat Iluminar RV Vidyanikethan, Off Mysore Road Near RV Engineering collage Mailasandra Bengaluru 560059 Managing Committee Member Habitat Illuminar Owners Association
9. Sri. Praveenkumar Deshamukh Residing at, Flat No-05063 Habitat Iluminar 4 9/1/2A/2B, Mailasandra Village Mysore Road, Near RV Engineering College Kengeri Hobli, Bengaluru-560059 Advisory Member Habitat Illuminar Owners Association.
...PLAINTIFFS

AND : 1. The Deputy Registrar of Co-operative Societies Zone-1, Bangalore Urban District "SahakaraSoudha", 1st Floor, 3rd Main, 8th Cross, Margosa Road Malleswaram, Bengaluru 560003
2. Habitat Illuminar Owners Association Mysore Road, Mylasandra Village, Kengeri Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, Bengaluru 560059
Represented by its Secretary
Sri. Nagendra Prasad Residing at, #09082, tower 9 Habitat Illuminar, Mylasandra. Bangalore-560059
3. Sri. Nandkumar Residing at, #01034 Tower 1, Habitat Illuminar Bangalore 560059 Managing Committee Member Habitat Illuminar Owners Association **4. Sri. Ganesh Shetty** Residing at, Flat #04082, Tower 4 Habitat Illuminar, Mylasandra Bangalore-560059 Managing Committee Member Habitat Illuminar Owners Association
5. Sri. Shantha Murthy Residing at, Flat #01051 Habitat Illuminar Mylasandra, Bangalore-560059 Managing Committee Member Habitat Illuminar Owners Association **6. Krishnendu Ghosh** Residing at, Flat #07104 Habitat Illuminar Mylasandra, Bangalore - 560059 Managing Committee Member Habitat Illuminar Owners Association **DEFENDANTS**

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas the Plaintiffs herein have instituted Original Suit O.S. No. 1969/2026 before the Hon'ble Civil Court at Bengaluru, seeking inter alia a decree of perpetual injunction restraining Defendant Nos. 2 to 6 from conducting or proceeding with the election process of Habitat Illuminar Apartment Owners' Association in violation of the Deed of Declaration and applicable governing laws.
The Hon'ble Court of the XVI Additional City Civil and Sessions Judge at Bengaluru, upon hearing the parties and perusing the material on record, has been pleased to pass an ad-interim order of injunction restraining Defendant No.2 to 6 and all persons acting through them from holding or proceeding with the election process of the Habitat Illuminar Apartment Owners' Association, including the elections scheduled on 22.03.2026, until the next date of hearing, in order to ensure compliance with the provisions of the Deed of Declaration and the governing bye-laws.
Inerested parties are hereby directed to appear before the Hon'ble Court either in person or through a duly authorized pleader on **15.04.2026 at 11:00 A.M.**, to show cause, if any, against the claims of the Plaintiffs, failing which the matter shall be heard and determined in their absence.
Given under my hand and the seal of the Court, this the 2/04/2026.

By Order of the Court
Sd/- Senior Sheristedar
City Civil Court, Bengaluru

Advocate for Plaintiffs Kieran S Narayan, AAGNA
ADVOCATES & SOLICITORS
Sai Eshwar - No 9D, 2nd Street, Car Street Halasuru, Bangalore -560 008

Investor sentiment takes hit amid mkt rout

While AMFI pushes its 'Mutual Funds Sahi Hai' campaign aggressively, some fund managers voice contrarian views

ARSHAD KHAN @ New Delhi

THE sharp correction in domestic equities market, fuelled by the West Asia conflict and India's relative underperformance against global peers over the past two years, has split industry opinions, leaving most investors bewildered. While the Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI) pushes its "Mutual Funds Sahi Hai" campaign aggressively, a few fund managers and equity market experts are voicing contrarian views.

DSP Mutual Fund's recent ad in major newspapers, headlined "We Don't Know What Happens Next," has sparked heated social media debates among investors and experts over its messaging and timing. The advertisement highlights market uncertainty while encouraging discipline through systematic investment plans (SIPs) rather than knee-jerk reactions. Few fund managers, however, feel that India's equity market was bound for a correction.

A senior fund manger said most mutual funds kept on pouring money on super expensive mid cap and small-cap stocks without re-evaluating their strategy. "Investors who started SIPs just one or two years ago might be facing losses, prompting second thoughts about their decision. A lot of them are thinking that a reliable 6% yield by fixed deposits would have been a better choice," stated the manager requesting not to be named.

In the recently concluded month of March, the Nifty 50 saw a sharp decline and fell nearly 11.3% to 11.4%, marking one of the worst months in recent years. Before March

2026, India's equity market had underperformed global peers due to expensive valuation concerns, relentless FII selling, AI-related concerns and global cues like US tariffs and geopolitical concerns in West Asia.

Brokerages downgrade India

Global brokerage firm Nomura recently downgraded Indian equities to "neutral" from "overweight", citing rising risks from rising oil prices amid ongoing tensions in West Asia, a potential slowdown in domestic inflows, and concerns about India's weak positioning in the AI landscape.

It added that prolonged disruptions to energy supplies via the Strait of Hormuz could keep oil prices elevated for longer than earlier expected, posing a major headwind to India's economy and corporate earnings. India remains among the most vulnerable economies in Asia to sustained high energy prices due to its heavy reliance on imports.

Brent crude prices are hovering around $110/barrel, up 60% since the US/Israel and Iran conflict began on February 28. Higher oil prices for an import-dependent nation such as India are likely to translate into higher inflation in the coming months, exerting pressure on currency stability and corporate margins, impacting overall equity market sentiment.

Nomura has recommended that investors switch to South Korea and China, where it maintains an "overweight" stance. Other brokerage firms like Citi Research, Goldman Sachs and Bernstein have all lowered their Nifty 50 targets, warning that a prolonged spell of high oil prices may trigger earnings downgrades and keep market sentiment under pressure. Goldman Sachs has downgraded Indian equities to 'marketweight' from 'overweight' and cut its 12-month Nifty target to around 25,300–25,900 from earlier projections of about 29,300–29,500, implying a reduction of roughly 14%.

IN CONVERSATION

GAGAN BANGA
Managing director and chief executive officer, Sammaan Capital

'As a promoter IHC brings strong global funding networks'

GAGAN Banga-led Sammaan Capital, formerly Indiabulls Housing Finance, has once again become a promoter-driven company after several years, with Abu Dhabi-based International Holdings Company (IHC)—the UAE's most valuable firm with a market capitalisation of $239 billion—pumping in $1 billion for a 66.3% stake. With a new identity as an IHC entity, it is moving away from its legacy as a pure-play mortgage financier. **Gagan Banga**, MD and CEO of Sammaan Capital, tells **Benn Kochuveedan** it plans to expand its branch network to 1,500 from about 200, double its workforce to 10,000 from 4,000, and scale up its customer base to 50 million from 1.4 million. **Excerpts**:

Sammaan Capital has undergone several changes and divestments in recent years. With IHC coming in, you are once again a promoter-driven firm. How confident are you about achieving these aggressive targets?

We aim to be among the top three NBFCs with a diversified portfolio, doubling AUM to ₹1.3-1.5 lakh crore by FY29. We will move beyond being a pure-play mortgage lender and transition into a diversified NBFC, targeting mid- to low-income borrowers. This will be supported by expanding our branch network to 1,500 from just over 200 currently. We will offer a wider suite of retail credit products, including secured and unsecured MSME loans, personal loans, business loans and gold loans. Alongside, we plan to more than double our headcount to 10,000.

As promoter IHC brings strong global funding networks and institutional relationships, along with substantial capital. This will help bring down our cost of funds to about 7.5%, enhancing financial flexibility and supporting growth. As an IHC group company, we will leverage the UAE's strong sovereign rating to strengthen our credit profile, both domestically and internationally.

We will move beyond a pure-play mortgage lender and transition into a diversified NBFC, targeting mid-to low-income borrowers. This will be supported by expanding our branch network to 1,500 from over 200 currently

How confident am I? More than 100%. Given our learnings over the past seven to eight years, the quality of capital, and the strength of our new parent—larger than the biggest Indian companies—the targets are very achievable.

You have led the company since its Indiabulls days. How do you see its evolution and transition under a foreign promoter?

We have gone through multiple phases — strong growth under an individual promoter, followed by a period of consolidation where we navigated what was an existential crisis. We then stabilised, board-driven company, raising about ₹5,000 crore in equity in 2024.

It became clear that meaningful growth would require strong parentage. With consolidation underway globally and in India's financial services sector, we needed a long-term institutional backer. IHC provides exactly that — it is a sovereign-owned, permanent capital provider, not a private equity investor. This is its first financial services investment in India, making it a multi-decade opportunity for both Sammaan and IHC. I believe just as I oversaw one of the largest deleveraging exercises in the sector, I will lead one of the largest value-creation journeys. This is a new chapter—a rebirth—and positions us firmly for long-term growth.

Before the crisis, the company was part of Nifty 50. When do you see a return to that league?

One key learning is that management should focus on running the business well and creating value. Market milestones are secondary. I have no interest in chasing index inclusion. What matters more is delivering a high-teen return on equity. That is far more meaningful than being part of the Nifty 50 or Sensex.

With IHC taking control, do you expect board-level changes?

There are no immediate plans for board changes. Directors will retire in normal course, and replacements will be brought in accordingly. As a listed company, we will comply with required balance between independent, executive and non-executive directors.

MONEY-WISE

CREATING ₹10 CRORE CORPUS OVER 30 YRS

FINANCIAL ADVICE

PV SUBRAMANYAM
writes at www.subramoney.com and has authored the best seller 'Retire Rich - Invest ₹40 a day'

IF you are a 22-year old, can you accumulate ₹10 crore in your life-time?

Yes, accumulating ₹10 crores in 30 years via equity investments in India is achievable with discipline, consistency, and power of compounding.

Why did I choose equity investments as a route? Because that is the only market that I understand. It requires a realistic plan, not speculation or stock-picking. Indian equities (Nifty 50 / Sensex) have historically delivered 12–15% CAGR over long periods (including dividends), making this a "reasonable" wealth-building path for patient investors.

You need to understand the power of compounding + realistic returns

- Historically Nifty has given returns of 12-14% and Nifty 500 (broader market) has been 15% in the same window.
- How much you need to invest assuming you start with zero corpus today and invest via monthly SIP (most common & easiest method in India): At 12%, you invest only ₹1 crore over 30 years and let compounding do the rest (₹9 crore comes from growth). Use step-up SIP — increase your SIP by 10 every year as your income grows.

Foundation First:

- Build 6–12 months emergency fund in liquid/savings.
- Get term life + health insurance.
- Clear high-interest debt (credit cards, personal loans).

Choose right vehicles (low-cost, diversified equities)

- Best option for most people: Index funds / ETFs
- Core: Nifty 50 Index Fund or Nifty 500 / Nifty Next 50.
- (low expense ratio <0.3%): UTI Nifty 50 Index, HDFC Nifty 50, etc.
- ETFs (cheaper): Nifty 50 Bees, Nifty 500 ETF — buy via demat.
- Simple 3-fund portfolio (if you want higher growth):
- 70% Nifty 50/large-cap index
- 20% Nifty midcap 150/Next 50
- 10% Nifty small-cap 250

Execution

- Start SIP on salary credit day.
- Increase SIP each year
- Stay invested for full 30 years — never redeem early for lifestyle expenses.
- Review once a year. Ignore daily news and crashes.

Tax efficiency (2026 rules)

- Equity mutual funds / stocks: Long-term capital gains (holding >1 year) taxed at 12.5% on gains above ₹1.25 lakh per financial year.

Risks & reality check

- Volatility: You will see 30–50% drawdowns (2008, 2020, etc.). Stay invested.
- Returns not guaranteed: Past 12-15% ≠future. If markets deliver only 10%, you'll need higher SIPs.
- Behaviour is 80% of success: The biggest risk is you stopping SIPs during crashes or chasing "better" schemes.
- Life changes: Marriage, kids, house — adjust SIP upward, don't stop.

Bonus Accelerators

- Salary growth: If your income rises 10% yearly, step-up SIP accordingly, you may hit the target with even lower starting amount

MONEY MATTERS

MUST KNOW THESE ABOUT FUTURE OF YOUR PAYMENTS

FINANCIAL KNOWLEDGE

RAJAS KELKAR
(The author is editor-in-chief at www.moneyminute.in)

IT may be the worst time for financial markets worldwide, with uncertainty ahead. There are no signs of an end to disruptions due to the conflict in West Asia, and you are already reeling in its aftermath as global supply chains are affected.

While you grapple with solutions that could help you see you through these disruptions, the business of nations has to move forward. You cannot take your eyes off the future despite uncertainties in the present. The Reserve Bank of India released a document outlining a vision for payments through 'Payments Vision 2028' last week.

It is not just about scanning a QR code. It is about a future where your bank account is portable, your cheques are instant, and your security is under your total control.

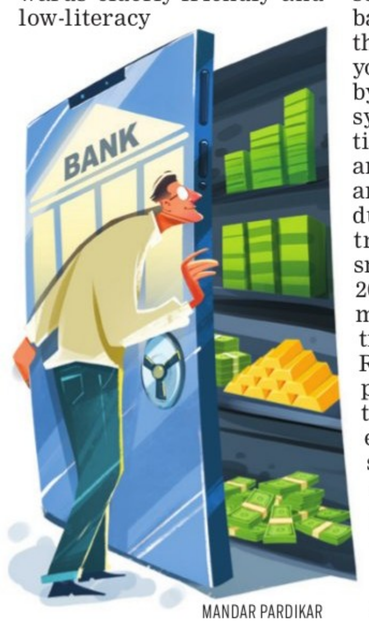
Your bank account

You got your bank account with standing instructions for salary credits, monthly systematic investment plans, or payment mandates for utility bills. The RBI document unveils a new Payments Switching Service (PaSS) that will work as a central hub for all your payment mandates. If you wish to move from one bank to another, you can migrate all your automated payments seamlessly without having to register every single biller. It puts a lot of power in your hands to seek the best possible services from banks.

Another innovation is about 'e-cheques'. They are digital instructions with cryptographic security and digital signatures. There is no need to create a paper trail, and it can be cleared in close to real time. All of that will enhance the efficiency of high-value business, property or other asset sale transactions.

In your regular mobile app banking, you may have noticed the switch to turn credit and debit cards on or off. Such granularity will now be available even for UPI and net banking under the new proposed changes. You can control the use of your UPI ID when you are not using it by freezing it. The idea is to provide you with a lock on your digital wallet so that scammers do not initiate any unauthorised debit activity on your account.

The Vision 2028 document officially recognises that 'digital' should not mean 'difficult'. The RBI is working towards elderly-friendly and low-literacy interfaces. You can use artificial intelligence to give voice commands in your local language.



MANDAR PARDIKAR

The other problem you face is completing transactions if network connectivity is poor. The proposed new protocol will ensure payments are completed even in 'shadow zones' where there is no data connectivity. Digital money will become as reliable as cash in your pocket.

More countries are accepting UPI payments in rupees. An important hurdle to expanding UPI's use internationally is the high transaction costs and long wait times for international money transfers. You will be able to make transactions at local shops in Europe, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia using UPI.

What does it mean to you

While your investments are seamlessly integrated digitally via mobile devices, the RBI is working to expand the scope of payments. The idea is to give you the ability to choose the bank that can serve you best. It also puts the banking system on notice, as they make an effort to ensure you are not easily taken away by competition. The payment system is rife with the potential for fraud, data breaches, and other malpractices. You are on tenterhooks when conducting high-value digital transactions or spending small amounts overseas. By 2028, your relationship with money will be defined by control and convenience. The RBI isn't just trying to make payments faster; it's trying to make the entire financial ecosystem as flexible as a smartphone app. As these changes roll out, your biggest asset won't just be the balance in your account, but your ability to use these new tools to keep that balance safe and mobile.

MPC meet: RBI unlikely to tweak rates

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @ New Delhi

THE upcoming monetary policy meeting of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), scheduled for April 6–9, is expected to see the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) maintain a pause on policy rates, even as inflation risks, currency pressures and global uncertainties intensify.

As per ICRA, the RBI is likely to prioritise price stability over growth concerns, with CPI inflation projected to inch up to 4.3% in FY27. The rating agency has flagged upside risks to inflation, mainly from crude oil prices amid ongoing tensions in West Asia, noting that every 10% rise in oil prices may push inflation higher by 40–60 basis points. Despite an expected moderation in GDP growth to 6.5% in FY27, ICRA expects the MPC to remain on an extended pause through the fiscal, while continuing to

manage liquidity conditions.

A similar view has been echoed by SBI Research, which expects the RBI to maintain status quo in the upcoming policy, citing an increasingly volatile global backdrop. The report says disruptions in global oil markets and a rise in imported inflation, exacerbated by the weakening rupee, have complicated the policy environment. It adds that the RBI is likely to focus on liquidity modulation and market stability measures, rather than resorting to rate changes. Rating agency CRISIL also points towards a pause, with inflation expected to gradually rise and growth remaining relatively resilient, thereby reducing the urgency for any near-term policy action.

However, depreciation in rupee has emerged as a key variable ahead of the policy. Persistent foreign portfolio outflows and elevated crude prices have put pressure on the currency, prompting some market participants to draw parallels with the 2013 Taper Tantrum, when the RBI responded with aggressive tightening measures to stabilise rupee. Against this backdrop, there is a growing debate on whether the RBI may be forced to adopt a more hawkish stance if external pressures intensify further.

While a rate hike is not the base case, some experts believe the risk of a surprise move can't be ruled out if rupee continues to weaken or inflation risks escalate. That said, with forex reserves still providing a buffer and growth showing signs of moderation, the more likely outcome remains a hawkish pause, where the RBI holds rates but signals heightened vigilance on inflation and external stability.

RBI may prioritise price stability over growth concerns

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Cabot Sanmar announces capacity expansion with ₹220 crore investment

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @ Chennai

CHENNAI-based Cabot Sanmar Limited, a joint venture (JV) between Cabot Corporation, USA, and The Sanmar Group in India, announced the expansion of its fumed silica manufacturing capacity to meet growing customer demand in India with an investment of ₹220 crore.

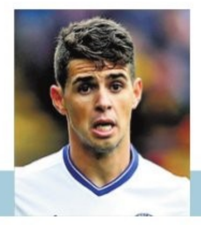
The expansion will be in its brownfield facility located in Mettur, Salem district of Tamil Nadu, and is expected to be commissioned by the end of 2027. These two companies have been in joint venture for the past 30 years in India. Cabot has nearly 40 manufacturing plants across the globe, whereas Sanmar has only one plant in Mettur.

Cabot Sanmar's CAB-O-SIL fumed silica products are widely used across a diverse range of applications including pharma, food, paints and coatings, adhesives and sealants, personal care, crop protection, among others. The expanded capacity will enhance availability of high-quality fumed silica for domestic customers, supporting India's growing advanced manufacturing and specialty chemicals sector.

"With this investment, Cabot Sanmar will expand domestic availability of a key ingredient that goes into making of products we use every day," said Krishna Kumar Rangachari, director, Cabot Sanmar Limited.

"This expansion reflects our shared commitment to collaboration, innovation, and delivering high-quality fumed silica to support growing demand," said Sean Keohane, President & CEO, Cabot Corporation.

Ex-Brazil star Oscar retires with heart problem



Former Brazil international Oscar has been forced to retire at the age of 34 with cardiac issues, his club Sao Paulo confirmed on Saturday. The attacking midfielder was hospitalised for five days in November after fainting during a routine medical and has not played since. He had a contract that was due to expire in 2027.

Royal hammering at Chinnaswamy

Patidar, David and Padikkal lead the way as holders Bengaluru overpower CSK to hand them third successive loss

GOMESH S @Chennai

RCB's Rajat Patidar (L) and Tim David added an unbeaten 99 of just 35 balls for the fourth wicket on Sunday | KEVIN NASHON

BRIEF SCORES

RCB 250/3 in 20 ovs (David 70 n.o, Padikkal 50) **bt** CSK 207 in 19.4 ovs (Sarfaraz 50, Veer 43; Bhuvneshwar 3/41).

ABOUT 20 months ago, when Chennai Super Kings played Royal Challengers Bengaluru in a must-win encounter at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium in IPL 2024, something fundamentally changed between the two teams. Till that fateful May evening, Chennai had won 21 of the 32 matches between the two teams. RCB's ten wins meant Super Kings had a more than 2:1 ratio in head-to-head. The rivalry between two of the three biggest brands and teams in the league, to a large extent, was only on paper and geography. Simply put, it was not even a competition. CSK dominated not just the rivalry but also the league. Till that date, Chennai had five titles and RCB none.

On May 18, 2024, it all changed. CSK went down to RCB by 27 runs and fell out of the play-off race while the latter was on a winning run to finish in top four. And that was just the beginning of something new. In the mega auction that followed, RCB put together the best side they could have in both batting and bowling. CSK, meanwhile, made signings that came back to cost them dearly. And it showed in the 2025 season. RCB won in Chennai for the first time in 18 years, they beat CSK again in Bengaluru before going on to win their first-ever IPL title. Trade-offs and new signings were made in the hopes of changing all that ahead of the 2026 season, but three games later, the story remains the same. Royal Challengers Bengaluru, once again, proved to be too good for Chennai Super Kings. The result on Sunday meant, RCB have won their last four games against CSK, taking the head-to-head tally to 14-21.

And unlike the last time they played at this venue, where RCB won by two runs, Sunday was a complete domination from the defending champions. It started with the onslaught of Phil Salt's 46 off 30 balls. Virat Kohli did his bit (18-ball 28) including a delightful lofted six down the ground. But, the story of the night was about two young Indian batters who have upskilled themselves to own the stage and outperform their biggest star in Kohli — Rajat Patidar and Devdutt Padikkal. Padikkal came to the team as a much-improved player last year before getting injured. In the post-tournament celebrations, he was still there despite being replaced by Mayank Agarwal in the team. Come 2025, Padikkal has only become a better batter, someone who can strike at more than 200 from the word go. If the season opener against Sunrisers Hyderabad showed glimpses of it, on Sunday, Padikkal did it all again with a 29-ball 50. He first added 56 off 37 with Salt before putting up another 58 in just 21 balls with captain Patidar before eventually getting out.

Patidar, on the other hand, is an IPL-winning captain. Kohli may be the biggest star of the franchise, but the MP batter is the one who made the former Indian captain's eternal dream come true last year. While he flew under the radar in terms of individual contributions in 2025, Patidar has taken it upon himself to change it this time around. And it showed as the 32-year-old smashed CSK bowlers all over Chinnaswamy. He smashed an unbeaten 48 off 19 only to be overshadowed by a blinder of an innings from Tim David who survived a no ball wicket to crack an unbeaten 70 off 25 balls. One of the eight sixes David hit ended up in Cubbon Park, literally, as RCB finished with 250/3. The contest, midway through the game, was all but done. Rest was only a matter of time, especially with an inexperienced middle-order of CSK going up against a quality RCB bowling attack.

If there ever was an example of what a mega auction could do to the three-season cycle, RCB and CSK are it. The former have become a well-rounded team to beat while the latter, already in transition, have become a shadow of themselves. And the way back for Chennai is likely going to be a long and arduous one.

Vijaykumar Vyshak (C) celebrates a wicket with his teammates | ASHWIN PRASATH

How 'instant plan from captain' helped Vyshak

CHANDRA PRABHU @Chennai

THE match-up between Punjab Kings' Vijaykumar Vyshak and Chennai Super Kings' Ayush Mhatre at Chepauk on Friday was noteworthy. Vyshak, who is known for his slower balls, now has another ball added to his arsenal — the wide yorkers. As Mhatre, who had already raced to a fifty, was going all-guns blazing against other Punjab bowlers, the onus was on the Karnataka pacer to get his team the breakthrough.

In the 12th over, Vyshak delivered a wide yorker to Mhatre, which was slammed for four through point. Vyshak there, on another day, could have changed his mind and bowled a different delivery. But that was not to be. "It doesn't matter which batter is there, who's batting. I know that as long as I am doing what I'm supposed to do, I'm going to win that challenge," he recounted in a virtual interaction facilitated by PBKS.

"It doesn't matter if it goes for a boundary or a six. If it's a good shot, then obviously you just get back to your run up and then bowl the same delivery again. I am someone who's going to look back and see if I can manage to nail those deliveries that have been asked for. If I do that, then I know that I am in a great space of mind and I know that I can win the game at any moment of the game for my team," he said.

And he did just that in the very next ball of that over. A similar delivery was bowled and Mhatre jammed it down, which found Yuzvendra Chahal at short third man. That wicket proved to be important one, as Chennai could not rely on another batter sans Sarfaraz Khan to guide them to a competitive total. Later in the match, Punjab went on to chase the target of 210 with eight balls to spare. He explained how the plan devised by his skipper Shreyas Iyer turned out to be a success. "It was an instant plan from the captain because he was going really well on the leg side. So we thought we'll try and make him hit the off-side. And it did help us. We leaked a couple of boundaries, but we managed to get the run rate a bit down because the way they were batting, it looked like they're going to get 230. So from there, we restricted them to 210," he explained.

Bought for ₹1.8 crore by the Punjab ahead of the 2025 IPL, the 29-year-old played as an impact-sub, scalping five wickets. He was mostly used as a death bowler. This season, he is given a larger role, to bowl across phases. In just two games, Vyshak has amassed a better wicket count (5) than he did last season (4).

Full story: newindianexpress.com

KKR SEEK SPARK

A rudderless Kolkata Knight Riders will need a strong turnaround against in-form Punjab Kings at home on Monday. A look...

Selection headache

One of KKR's biggest concerns is their selection. Out of three Kiwi players — Finn Allen, Tim Seifert and Rachin Ravindra, only Allen got to play. Rovman Powell too has not played yet.

High-riding Punjab

In stark contrast, Punjab Kings have everything going their way. Led by Shreyas Iyer, they come in with two wins from two matches. Their batting boasts of good performers like Cooper Connolly.

Rain threat

KKR could face an added burden of rain on Monday. According to the IMD weather bulletin, there is a high chance of rain impacting the match, which could also turn into a truncated affair.

- **KKR vs PBKS @ Kolkata from 7.30 PM**
- **Live on Star Sports and JioHotstar**

EXPRESS READ

Asian C'ships: Focus on wrestler Meenakshi

BISHKEK: India will head into the Asian Wrestling C'ships, beginning here Monday, hoping its new crop of wrestlers can rise to the continental challenge. The spotlight will be on 53kg wrestler Meenakshi Goyat, who scripted one of the biggest upsets at the trials by beating two-time Worlds medallist Antim Panghal.

Indian shooters set for Granada World Cup

GRANADA: Indian pistol and rifle shooters will head into the season-opening ISSF World Cup, beginning here on Monday, with a firm resolve to extend the dominance they displayed last year. Olympians Rhythm Sangwan and Anjum Moudgil and Mehuli Ghosh are some of the elite shooters who'll be seeking a good outing.

Aditi in top 20; Avani, Pranavi also struggle

LAS VEGAS: India's Aditi Ashok endured a disappointing four-over 76 in the 3rd round to slip to T-20 with one round left at the Aramco Championship. Aditi now has a total score of five-over par for the week. The other Indians — Pranavi Urs (78) and Avani Prashanth (81) were struggling. The two are placed T-69 and 73rd respectively.

Abhay advances, Anahat bows out

NEW DELHI: India's Abhay Singh rallied to beat Egyptian World No 13 Aly Abou Eleinen 3-2 in the men's singles opening round of the El Gouna Open, a PSA Platinum event, in El Gouna, Egypt. World No 25 Abhay eked out a 9-11, 11-8, 3-11, 11-4, 11-8. Anahat (World No 20) lost (11-8, 11-5, 9-11, 11-8) to World No 1 Hania El Hammamy.

Shami, Pant dazzle as Lucknow beat Hyderabad

Captain Rishabh Pant (R) scored an unbeaten 68 to help team win | VINAY MADAPU

BRIEF SCORES : Sunrisers Hyderabad 156/9 in 20 ovs (Klaasen 62, Nitish 56; Shami 2/9) **lost to** Lucknow Super Giants 160/5 in 19.5 ovs (Pant 68 n.o, Markram 45; Dubey 2/18).

ENS @Hyderabad

MOHAMMED Shami's 2/9, which featured 18 dot balls, and Rishabh Pant's composed unbeaten fifty were the highlights as Lucknow Super Giants posted a five-wicket win over Sunrisers Hyderabad at the Rajiv Gandhi Stadium in Hyderabad on Sunday.

Shami bowled a spell for the ages. The two wickets of both Abhishek Sharma and Travis Head, in addition to probing deliveries largely became responsible for Sunrisers Hyderabad being restricted to 156 for 9. The visitors rode on Aiden Markram's 27-ball-45 and Pant's 50-ball-68 not out to surpass the target in the last over. The chase got nervy towards the end with nine runs needed off the final over but Pant smashed Jaydev Unadkat for two straight boundaries. It was an innings that had nine boundaries and his choice of strokes was deliberate on a slowish track where SRH spinners Harsh Dubey and Shivang Kumar made the ball talk.

Earlier, Shami was ably supported by young Prince Yadav (2/34), to put the hosts teetering at 26/4. Overlooked time and again, the 35-year-old sent a stern reminder with his performance that was pivotal to Lucknow choking Hyderabad. His wicket of Abhishek stood out. Instead of a conventional slip, a 'fly slip' or short third-man on the circle was stationed and Manimaran Siddharth took a smart diving catch to send the opener back off the bowling of the veteran. Nitish Kumar Reddy and Heinrich Klassen steadied the SRH ship by stitching a crucial partnership of 116 runs for the fifth wicket. However, SRH suffered another collapse as they lost five wickets for 14 runs in the last 2.3 overs.

Klaasen and Nitish's 116-run partnership is SRH's highest for the fifth wicket, bettering the 82-run stand between Klaasen and Nitish.

With this win, Lucknow boast a superior head-to-head record against Hyderabad, winning five of the last seven matches since the team's inception in 2022.

Asian C'ships: World champs Minakshi, Jaismine enter semis

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

REIGNING world champions Jaismine Lamboria (57kg) and Minakshi Hooda (48kg) produced power-packed performances to enter the semifinals of the Asian Boxing Championships in Ulaanbaatar (Mongolia) on Sunday.

Having received byes in the opening round, the No 1 seeds in their weight categories were making their first appearance in the continental meet.

Besides, the male boxers — Lokesh (85kg), Akash (70kg) and Harsh Choudhary (90kg) — also entered the last-four stage. However, Ankush (80kg) suffered a loss. Controlling the bout with sharp combinations and ring awareness, Minakshi beat Yuka Sadamatsu of Japan by unanimous verdict. Jaismine, who was making her first international appearance of the season, also produced a similar show to rout China's Ziyi Chen. Jaismine was the standout pugilist last year and she'll be hoping to go all the way.

Jaismine Lamboria defeated Chinese Ziyi Chen in the quarterfinals | EXPRESS

Focus on Nikhat, Lovlina

The business end has arrived. Senior pros and No 1 seeds Nikhat Zareen (51kg) and Lovlina Borgohain (75kg) will be in focus as they enter the ring for their respective semifinal bouts on Monday. While Nikhat will be making her second appearance, Lovlina, having received a bye in the quarterfinals, will be fighting for the first time. On one hand, Nikhat will be up against China's Wu Yu, an opponent who had beaten her in Round of 16 en route gold in the 2024 Paris Games. Lovlina, on the other hand, will take on Aziza Zokirova of Uzbekistan, who had produced an easy win (via RSC) over a Japanese rival in her opening bout. Zokirova is a silver medallist from the 2024 edition and had captured silver (70kg) in the 2025 World Championships, where Lovlina had made a quiet exit.

Aimen leads SC Delhi to first victory in ISL

ENS @Chennai

MOHAMMED Aimen starred with a goal as SC Delhi secured their first-ever victory in the Indian Super League, defeating Kerala Blasters FC 2-0 at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in New Delhi on Sunday. The contest began at a lively tempo, with both sides engaging in end-to-end action early on. The breakthrough came in the 36th minute through an impressive team move. Rafael Ribeiro initiated the attack with a long ball into the right channel, finding Lamgoulen Semkholun, who surged forward and squared it perfectly for Aimen to guide into the net and hand team the lead.

The visitors' hopes suffered a setback in the 84th minute when their centre back Aibanbha Kupar Dohling was sent off for bringing down Augustine Lalrochana as the last defender. Delhi capitalised on the numerical advantage deep into stoppage time. In the 90+7 minute, Lalrochana led a swift counter-attack before setting up Matija Babovic, who finished calmly to seal a 2-0 victory. In another match, India winger Lallianzuala Chhangte's 73rd minute strike was enough for Mumbai City FC to defeat Odisha FC.

Pragg draws with Caruana; Vaishali beats Zhongyi

AGENCIES @Paphos (Cyprus)

R PRAGGNANANDHAA remained in search of his second win after drawing with pre-event favourite Fabiano Caruana, while his sister R Vaishali beat China's Tan Zhongyi in the seventh round of the Candidates tournaments here.

At the half-way stage, Pragg remains on a fifty per cent score and will need a miracle in the final seven games in order to come into contention. Leader Javokhir Sindarov of Uzbekistan drew with Anish Giri of Holland. In the women's section, Anna Muzychuk of Ukraine continued to lead the tables on 4.5 points following a draw with Bibisara Assaubayeva of Kazakhstan. R Vaishali stands on 4 points and is in second spot, while Bibisara is now in third spot. **Results: Open:** R Praggnanandhaa (IND, 3.5) drew with F Caruana (USA, 4.5); J Sindarov (UZB, 6) drew with Anish Giri (NED, 3.5); A Esipenko (RUS, 2) lost to Wei Yi (CHN, 3); M Bluebaum (GER, 3) drew with H Nakamura (USA, 2.5). **Women:** B Assuabayeva (KAZ, 3) drew with A Muzychuk (UKR, 4.5); R Vaishali (IND, 4) bt Z Tan (CHN, 2.5).

FOOTBALL

Arsenal stunned by Southampton in FA Cup

AGENCIES @Southampton

ARSENAL suffered a shock FA Cup quarter-final exit as the Premier League leaders crashed to an embarrassing 2-1 defeat against second tier Southampton on Saturday.

Mikel Arteta's side were stunned by Shea Charles' late winner in a memorable quarter-final giant-killing at St Mary's.

Ross Stewart put Southampton ahead in the first-half and Viktor Gyokeres' equaliser couldn't save Arsenal from only their fifth loss in all competitions this season.

After losing the League Cup final against Manchester City before the international break, the Gunners have squandered another chance to end their six-year trophy drought.

Barca edge Atletico

BARCELONA: Robert Lewandowski shouldered home a dramatic late winner for Barcelona as they edged Atletico Madrid 2-1 to move seven points clear at the top of La Liga after Real Madrid slipped up. Real were beaten 2-1 at Mallorca earlier on and Barca capitalised to take a big step towards defending the league title.

Southampton's Shea Charles (L) rejoices after scoring the second goal | AP

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS
BENGALURU, MONDAY
06.04.2026

EDUCATION EXPRESS
edex YOUR LIFE COACH

UPCOMING EXAMINATIONS

JEE MAIN SESSION 2	RBI ASSISTANT PRELIMS 2026	UPSC NDA & NA (I)
Dates: April 6, 7, 8, 2026	Date: April 11, 13, 2026	Date: April 12, 2026

Scholarships You Should Know About

The biggest scholarships get the most attention, but they are not the only ones available. Several lesser-known options offer meaningful support with narrower applicant pools. Here are six to consider, especially if you fall outside typical eligibility brackets. Verify the latest information on the official sites before applying.

1 Sarla Devi Scholarship
For meritorious undergraduates in Delhi-NCR from economically disadvantaged families across Science, Arts, Commerce, and vocational courses. Offers up to ₹75,000. Check each cycle for dates and details.

2 P&G Shiksha Betiyan Scholarship
For women pursuing technical education in STEM, ITIs, or supply-chain fields. Selection is routed through partner institutions and may include mentorship. Check with your college for timeline details.

3 NorthSouth Foundation Scholarships
For low-income students entering professional courses such as engineering, MBBS, or pharmacy. Offers up to ₹1.5 lakh a year. Applications usually open from July to October on the foundation portal.

4 Kent State University Global Scholarship
For Indian students applying for undergraduate study at the university. Considered automatically during admission. Award value varies by academic performance, with extra support possible through Honors College.

5 Nutanix Spark Scholarship
For women in India pursuing technology-focused courses such as computer science and related engineering fields. Up to 10 awards of $1,000–$5,000 are available in each cycle. The deadline is May 31, 2026.

6 AAUW International Fellowships
For women planning postgraduate study in the US. Open to non-US citizens, with awards ranging from $20,000 to $50,000. Applications usually run from September to November each year. Do check official dates.

KARTHIKEYA S

YOUNG, POLITICALLY AWARE, YET ABSENT

Despite being India's largest voting bloc, why are youngsters cautious about engaging with formal politics?

"Gen-Z protests."
"Student-led movement."
"Youth will transform our country."

THESE phrases are often used to describe the influence of India's largest political constituency: young voters.

In a country where the median age hovers around 28, political leaders frequently position young people as drivers of progress and the future of the nation. Parties field younger candidates to appeal to first-time voters, while manifestos promise jobs, skills, education, and entrepreneurship.

Behind this deliberate focus lies a simple fact: nearly 65% of India's population is below the age of 35. Our netas place the responsibility of India's future — and electoral success — on the shoulders of this large population.

The numbers, however, paint a more complex picture. Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS)–Lokniti surveys show voter turnout among 18–25-year-olds at around 50–55% in many regions, lower than older groups.

Awareness is not the issue. One study found that around 80–90% of young Indians show political awareness, yet only 50–60% engage through voting, campaigning, or party participation. This gap points to a deeper unease with the system.

Sidelined by scepticism?

"It is not that I am totally uninterested in politics. I am aware of things happening," says Nandana KS, a student at Cochin University of Science and Technology (CUSAT), adding that she chooses to remain on the sidelines.

"I have seen people judging others for taking a political stand... so I just want to stay informed rather than being an active participant," she explains. Her stance also stems from the performative and polarised nature of political spaces, especially online. "Being silent or neutral is always considered as being uninformed," she notes, pointing to a culture where social media rewards strong, emotional takes.

There is also a persistent scepticism about "the system" among youngsters. "People generally care about outcomes, they just don't always believe the process works," Nandana says, adding that many disengage because "the feedback loop is broken." She believes change is more likely to come from technology and science than from the ballot box.

Barriers to entry

This distrust might also stem from a lack of representation of youth in politics. For instance, only around 11% of MPs in the 18th Lok Sabha are under the age of 40.

G Mohith, a PhD scholar at the University of Hyderabad and student activist associated with the SFI, says economic pressures, family expectations, and the need for stable employment push young people to prioritise careers over activism.

"Politics is risky, and not a stable profession with guaranteed income, which makes it difficult for youth to sustain their families," he says.

According to CSDS-Lokniti, while over 60% of youth express interest in politics, only about 20–25% would consider entering it as a career.

Mohith argues that this non-participation is not accidental. "The system often tries to keep youth away from politics or make them apolitical. Social conditioning also plays a hand in this," he believes.

Embers of youth politics still burning

Disengagement is not total, however, thankfully. Youth continue to mobilise around jobs, education, and justice. "There is huge interest among youth to be political and contribute to society. More young people are understanding their role in politics today," Mohith opines, pointing to Nepal, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka, as examples where youth-led movements ignited change. At the same time, structural barriers remain. "There is still a perception that politics is only for people with money power and muscle power," he adds, stressing the need for a "culture of zero-budget politics."

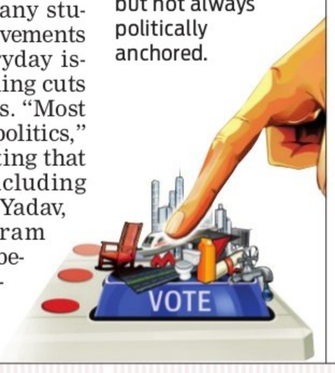
Political action, he says, begins by holding power to account. "When youth become conscious about social issues and start questioning the system, that itself is a form of political engagement," he explains.

Campuses as launchpads

In several campuses across India, student politics continues to serve as a crucial entry point for many students. Organisations and movements help students connect everyday issues like fee hikes and funding cuts to larger political structures. "Most student issues are rooted in politics," Mohith says. It is worth noting that several Indian leaders, including Arun Jaitley, Lalu Prasad Yadav, Mamata Banerjee, Sitaram Yechuri, and Ashok Gehlot, began their journeys in campus politics.

LATE TO THE PARTY?

Low formal participation does not necessarily mean indifference. In many cases, young people are both informed and opinionated. They are responsive to public issues, even if they remain distant from parties, electoral work, or long-term political structures. That distance can come from distrust, fatigue, social pressure, or the sense that institutions do not care enough. The result is a generation that may be politically alert, but not always politically anchored.



At A Glance: Inside JEE Advanced 2026

The exam remains the gateway to the IITs, institutions of national importance that rank among India's most sought-after destinations for engineering and science education

YECHURI SASHIKANTH

ADMISSIONS to various undergraduate courses across 23 IITs are conducted through the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) Advanced. Candidates who qualify in the JEE Main BE/BTech paper and secure a rank within the top 2.50 lakh are eligible to appear for JEE Advanced.

IIT Roorkee, organiser of JEE Advanced 2026, has announced that the online written examination will be held on May 17. Eligible candidates can register online from April 23 to May 2. Aspirants must upload Class X and Class XII marksheets, along with other documents, to complete the registration process.

The examination consists of two question papers, Paper 1 and Paper 2, each of three hours. Candidates must appear for both papers. Each paper has three sections: Physics, Chemistry, and Mathematics. The examination is conducted for a total of 360 marks, with each paper carrying 180 marks.

Candidates aspiring to join the BArch programme offered at IIT (BHU) Varanasi, IIT Kharagpur, and IIT Roorkee, must also pass the Architecture Aptitude Test (AAT). The registration window for AAT will be open from June 1 to 2, 2026. The exam will be held from 9 am to 12 noon on June 4, 2026.

DID YOU KNOW?

A candidate can attempt JEE Advanced a maximum of two times in two consecutive years!

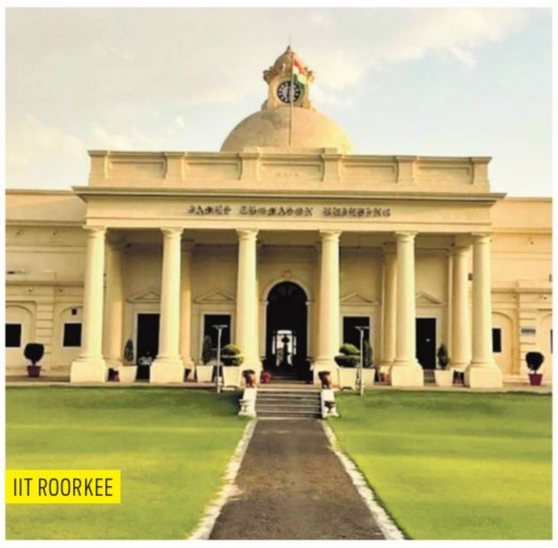
UNDERGRADUATE PATHWAYS AT IITs

CORE DEGREES
- **BTech** (Bachelor of Technology)
- **BSc** (Bachelor of Science)
- **BArch** (Bachelor of Architecture)

DUAL DEGREES (TECH)
- BTech + MTech
- BSc + MSc

DUAL DEGREES (MANAGEMENT)
- BTech + MBA
- BSc + MBA

INTEGRATED PROGRAMMES
- Integrated MTech
- Integrated BSc + MSc


IIT ROORKEE

Outside The Boundary

As sport scales, so does the range of careers that keep it running

NIKHIL ABHISHEK

IN a modern cricket setup, a batter might spend hours in the nets and not face a single bowler. Instead, a sidearm specialist stands a few metres away, using a throwing stick to deliver hundreds of balls at speed, repeating the same line until it becomes instinct. It is a paid role built around practice, one that barely existed a few years ago.

Professional sport today runs on a network of specialised roles far from the action on the field. A Google-Deloitte estimate put India's sports market at $52 billion in 2023 and projected it to reach $130 billion by 2030, with more than 1 crore jobs linked to that growth. Contract roles at the Sports Authority of India for performance analysts in psychology, biomechanics, nutrition, physiology, and physiotherapy show how wide the field has become, with starting pay of around ₹60,000 a month.

For Shebani Bhaskar, international cricketer and commentator, sport as a career once only meant pushing through bruises and bad days, a daily contest of form, fitness, and survival. "As players, the focus is naturally on staying in the game. It was only later that I realised there were serious roles in analysis, training, and support work," she says, while cautioning, "As players, the focus is naturally on staying in the game. It was only later that I realised there were serious roles in analysis, training, and support work,"

game plan

As teams, leagues, and broadcasters grow more structured, they create room for people who can contribute to performance, preparation, and presentation, even if they never play professionally. This has redrawn the arc of a player's career. Bhaskar's path shows how work can continue after stepping away from the pitch. She moved from cricket into commentary, while building academic depth in communication and IT, earning two master's degrees. She is now considering software ideas for the game she knows best, a reminder that range can matter as much as passion.

THIS WEEK CHANGED EVERYTHING

April 7, 1948
World Health Organization founded
78 years ago, the World Health Organization came into force as the UN's main health body. It gave epidemics, vaccination, disease surveillance, and public health standards a permanent international forum. Modern health policy, research, and medical cooperation still rely on the structure it built.

April 12, 1961
First human spaceflight achieved
65 years ago, ***Yuri Gagarin*** orbited Earth aboard Vostok 1, becoming the first human in space. The 108-minute flight changed space travel from theory into lived fact. It redrew technological ambition, intensified the space race, and opened the long human path from low Earth orbit to modern space stations.

April 10, 1982
INSAT-1A begins India's satcom era
44 years ago, INSAT-1A was launched, marking India's first step towards a multipurpose geostationary satellite system for communication, broadcasting, and weather services. Though it failed early, it helped establish the INSAT model that expanded TV access, telecom links, and forecasting across India.

April 12, 2005
NRHM targets rural health access
21 years ago, India launched the National Rural Health Mission to improve affordable healthcare in rural areas, especially for vulnerable groups. It pushed attention toward access, infrastructure, and frontline delivery. Public health careers, rural services, and maternal care still bear its imprint.

April 10, 2019
First black hole image is released
7 years ago, astronomers released the first image of a black hole, showing the glowing ring around M87*. The image turned a mathematical object into observed reality. It showed how theory, computation, and global telescope networks can work together, and gave physics a striking public moment of proof.

EARN AND LEARN

More students are launching ventures, with mixed results

Student entrepreneurs are building early, but the outcomes are uneven, shaped as much by consistency and systems as by the idea itself

ARYA VIDYA

CAMPUS entrepreneurship is spreading across higher education. In 2021-22, more than 6,400 Institutions' Innovation Councils were active across colleges and universities, recording 63,288 innovation and entrepreneurship activities. At the same time, a Deloitte study found that 62% of Gen Z respondents from India had an additional source of paid work, often through social media and online selling.

On campuses, this shows up as student-run enterprises built around personal skills, small services, and low-cost online businesses, with the common thread being less glamour than grind.

Nura Fathima, now 19, began her baking venture in Class 8 and soon found that paid orders brought a lot of pressure. "It started as curiosity, but once people began ordering, I had to think about pricing, timing, packaging, and delivery. It stopped feeling casual very quickly," she says.

That pattern runs through other student ventures too, especially when college schedules and client expectations collide. Preksha Agarwal, a third-year BCom student and founder of Minaraa, a wellness venture, says the real test is maintaining reliability as a brand alongside everyday college work. "If schedules clash or you are not prepared, people notice. I learnt very early that discipline is what keeps a service alive," she says.

Tiya Agarwal, another third-year BCom student who runs a personalised gifting brand, says the work teaches students how professional life actually functions. "You are dealing with clients, deadlines, content, pricing, and follow-ups," she says, emphasising that the experience teaches professionalism in a way classrooms usually do not.

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS City

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06.04.2026
MONDAY

DAY'S DIARY

The Tony goes to...

Tony Awards, an annual awards for distinguished achievement in American theatre made their official debut, today in 1947

CATEGORIES

Awards are given for best play, musical, play revival, and musical revival, and in categories like acting, directing, music, choreography, set and costume design

IN LOVING MEMORY OF

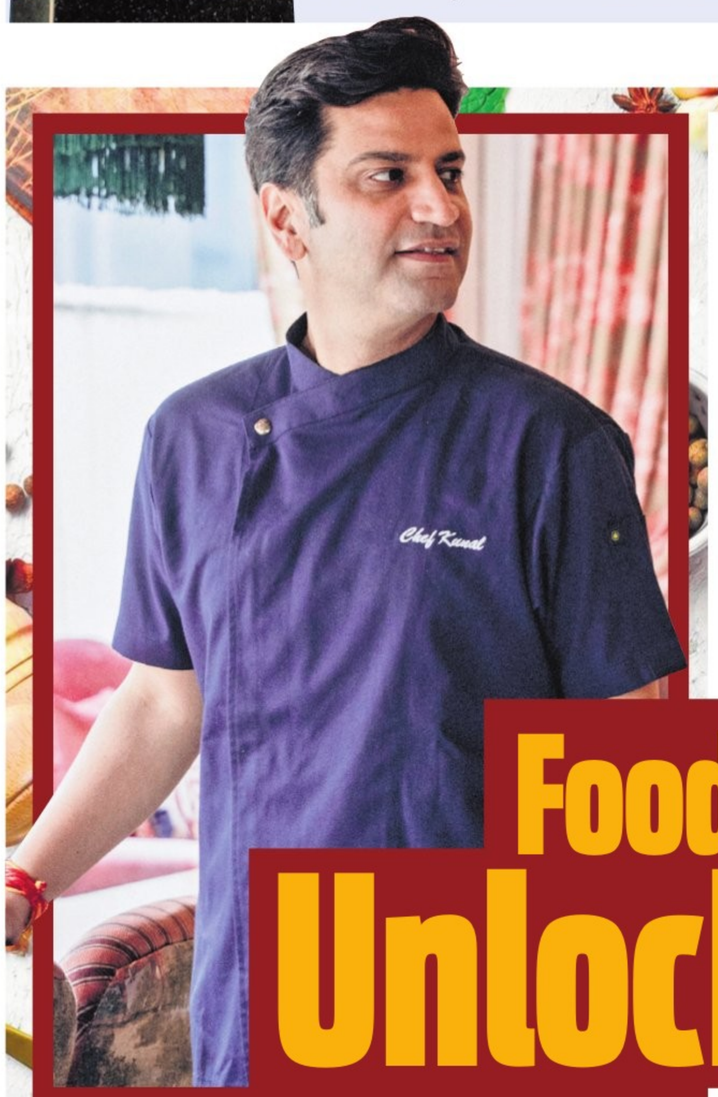
The award was debuted in the name of Antoinette Perry, a multifaceted theatre personality and the leader of the American Theatre Wing, after her passing

MEDALLION OF TONY

The award is a disk-shaped medallion depicting the masks of comedy and tragedy on one side and the profile of Perry on the other

Vrooming in Style

PG 3



Food Code Unlocked

In B'luru recently for the launch of his restaurant, celebrity chef Kunal Kapur on the changing face of India's food culture, the ongoing LPG crunch and how restaurants are adapting in real-time to keep their kitchens running

SRUTHI HEMACHANDRAN

AN easy smile, a familiar presence and an instinctive way of reading a plate, Kunal Kapur walks into the room much like he does on *MasterChef India*, observant and assured. Midway through the meal, there's a pause after a spoonful, followed by a quiet nod. It brings back the memory of watching him taste and judge dishes on screen. Only this time, it's right at the table.

And in the middle of it all, Kapur slips between host and chef, turning a simple afternoon into a tête-a-tête about all things food, the first being about the evolution of India's food culture. As a long-time judge on *MasterChef India*, he has had a front-row seat to this change. Pointing to how access has changed everyday cooking, he says, "We are not cooking the same food we were 15 years ago. An avocado then was a prized possession, costing ₹400-500. Today, it's in our homes and you're making avocado on toast without thinking twice. There was a time you didn't cook Asian food at home, but now, you're trying different dishes."

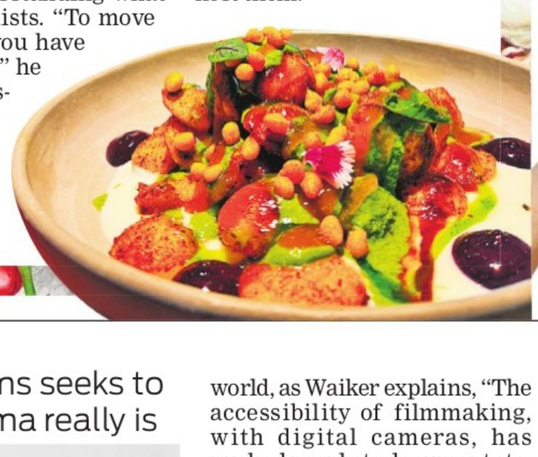
With more access, content and local cooking classes popping up, home cooks are now far more confident with experimentation. This exposure has expanded the boundaries of what is possible on platforms like *MasterChef India*. Challenges are no longer limited to familiar territory and contestants are willing to step outside their comfort zones. "In the earlier season, people were not as prepared for what was coming. Now they've seen the format, watched international versions, and surprise us," says Kapur, who was in the city ahead of the launch of his restaurant, Pincode.

And yet, for all the change, his approach to cooking remains grounded. Innovation, he believes, doesn't start with doing something new; it starts with understanding what already exists. "To move forward, you have to go back," he says, stressing how important it is to know the origin of a dish before reinterpreting it. There are elements that cannot be altered, while others allow room for creativity, and this equilibrium is what gives food meaning, preventing it from becoming change for the sake of change.

The influence of social media is impossible to ignore. It has become a space where trends take form, where chefs and home cooks alike find inspiration and where audiences engage with food in ways that go beyond the kitchen. "Food is a performing art. People enjoy watching it. Are they still going to cook it? No, but they still engage with it," he adds. This engagement often circles back into the kitchen. He points to dishes like Champaran mutton, which gained traction online before making their way into the menu. "I saw it trending a few years ago and thought we should do it," he shares.

The conversation also touches on the less-visible side of the industry. Recent challenges like the LPG crunch have forced restaurants to rethink their operations and Kapur speaks candidly about adapting – shifting to induction-based cooking, investing in new equipment and retraining teams. "In our industry, one problem ends and another appears. This one was big. It's a reminder that behind every seamless dining experience lies constant adjustment," he says.

And then comes a thought that feels closest to the heart of it all, something he has learnt over the years in kitchens and on television. "The show has taught me to be humble, to understand that good food and good chefs can come from anywhere. You don't need to be qualified; what has been handed down in our homes, and if we do that right, we are already master chefs in our own mind," he says. Ask him if fellow chefs Sanjeev Kapoor and Vikas Khanna, who are part of the *MasterChef* legacy, will drop by, he smiles, "Hopefully. They are like my brothers. I would love to host them."



Unmatched Vibe!

PICS: NAGARAJA GADEKAL & KEVIN NASHON

AHEAD of the high-energy match between legendary rivals RCB and CSK on Sunday, the stadium and its surroundings were abuzz with chatter and chants. Take a look:

MAHIMA NAGARAJU

This month-long curation of films seeks to explore what 21st century cinema really is

Reel revolution

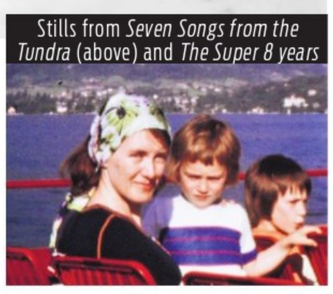
TWENTY-SIX years into the 21st century, how films are made and viewed has changed drastically with film cameras swapped for digital ones, theatres emptying out in favour of home viewing and short form content on social media making up most of the media we view daily. This has led to a verdict from some filmmakers of the 20th century which The Parallel Cinema Club's founder Nikhil Waiker, explains, "A lot of filmmakers, particular in arthouse cinema, from the previous century consider new-age cinema to be dead because the formal experimentation seen in the previous century is not pursued now. One reason is that festivals, award ceremonies, etc, have moulded themselves to cater to a certain kind of film, making the entire process formulaic." But is it really true that cinema is dead? Or are there people still pushing the boundaries, with the new opportunities and tools that the 21st century has brought? This is the question that a month-long curation of cinema by the film club set to take place at Angala, Cox Town, seeks to answer.

"We wanted to pick out themes relevant to our times and see how filmmakers are gradually adapting new-age aesthetics to tell the stories of our times," says Waiker. The month will see films from around the world screened under four categories: The World At Large, Life Before Social Media, Ciné Revolution and New-Age Journalism.

The first two spotlight how cinema has changed in an increasingly interconnected world, as Waiker explains, "The accessibility of filmmaking, with digital cameras, has pushed people to document stories of people and communities that were overlooked in the previous century. *Seven Songs from the Tundra* for eg., looks at a bunch of communities in Northern Siberia – how they go about their lives, what they do for a living, how they deal with boredom in such an isolated place." He adds, "The second segment is a curation of home videos and experimental films that look inward at a tumultuous point in the filmmakers' lives. The definition of cinema is a lot more ambiguous today than it was in the previous century – why would we not call an Instagram reel, cinema? These films push those boundaries. For eg., *The Super 8 years* is by Annie Ernaux, who is also a Nobel laureate in literature documents her life over 50-60 years – showing how with the ease of accessibility, people not trained as filmmakers turn into filmmakers and this process of documenting one's life has existed long before social media."

The third segment, cine revolution, features films that play around with form and technology that only came to be used in Cinema with the 21st century, as Waiker explains, "We have filmmakers like Leighton Piers, Kelly Gallagher, all of them using computer graphics and VFX to amplify what they were trying to say. For eg., Leighton Pierce's *Stone Moss* takes a bunch of photographs and turns them into a moving impressionist painting."

Stills from *Seven Songs from the Tundra* (above) and *The Super 8 years*



> *We wanted to pick out themes relevant to our times and see how filmmakers are adapting new-age aesthetics to tell the stories of our times* – Nikhil Waiker, founder, The Parallel Cinema Club

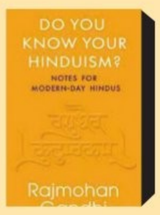
(21st Century Cinema is set to be held at Angala, Cox Town, till April 30 on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. Timings Vary. More information, @the parallelcinemaclub)

CITY READ

Sudha Murty's new book, released by Vice President, traces history through murals

Tides of Time: Bharat's History Through Murals in Parliament by Sudha Murty was released on April 1, by Vice President CP Radhakrishnan in the presence of Lok Sabha speaker Om Birla, Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, Harivansh Narayan Singh and other Members of Parliament. The Lok Sabha Secretariat publication traces Bharat's history through 58 mural panels in the Sansad Bhavan, offering historical context to artworks that span from the Indus Valley Civilisation to Independence. The book highlights murals commissioned in 1954, reflecting the country's rich visual storytelling tradition. The idea emerged from Murty's visit to Samvidhan Sadan, where she noted a lack of accessible material for students engaging with the murals. Speaking at the occasion, Murty said, "It is my hope that through this book, future generations will also get to enjoy the richness of this culture that I have known."

BOOK NOOK



Do You Know Your Hinduism?: Notes For Modern-Day Hindus

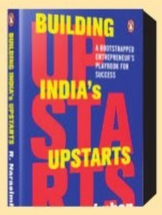
By Rajmohan Gandhi

In this book, the author examines Hinduism through a lens that sees it as an evolving civilisational entity, not a monolith.

Haiku, Me and You (I Love You)

By Shobha Tharoor Srinivasan

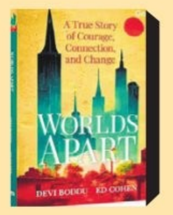
Through twenty-four beautifully crafted haikus for each hour of the day, the poems capture the special bond between a grandmother and her grandchild.



Building India's Upstarts

By R Narasimhan

The book reframes India's entrepreneurial success model, shifting the focus from fundraising milestones to fundamentals: margin expansion, distribution strength, pricing power and sustainable growth.



Worlds Apart: A True Story of Courage, Connection, and Change

By Ed Cohen & Devi Boddu

The book highlights the importance of believing in ourselves, and shows how hope grows when people experience genuine care, encouragement and opportunity.

SHOP TALK

Girls pass by mannequins placed in front of a retail store on DVG Road in Gandhi Bazaar | **SHASHIDHAR BYRAPPA**

QUICKFIX

FRENCH TOAST WAFFLES WITH BREAD

INGREDIENTS

- **Eggs:** 2
- **Brown sugar:** 1 tablespoon
- **Cinnamon powder:** ½ teaspoon
- **Vanilla extract:** 1 teaspoon
- **Milk:** ¼ cup
- **Sweet bread:** 2 slices
- **Chocolate spread:** 1-2 tablespoons
- **Butter (for greasing)**
- **Chocolate syrup (for drizzling)**

METHOD

- In a bowl, whisk the eggs, brown sugar, cinnamon powder, vanilla extract and milk together.
- Spread chocolate spread on one slice of sweet bread and place another slice on top to make a sandwich.
- Dip the bread sandwich into the egg mixture, coating both sides well.
- Grease the waffle maker with butter and heat it.
- Place the dipped sandwich in the waffle maker and cook until golden and crisp.
- Drizzle chocolate syrup on top and serve hot.

Contributed by **Gomathi Karthisen,** Chennai

DR VIVEK ARORA

The expert is a senior veterinarian, Crown Vet, Delhi.

Is bone broth necessary for all dogs, young and senior? What are its ingredients? Is mutton or chicken bone broth better?

Bone broth is not essential for every dog, but it can be a healthy addition to the diet when given occasionally. It helps support joint health, digestion, hydration and appetite, which is particularly useful for older dogs or pets recovering from illness. Bone broth can be prepared by slow-cooking mutton or chicken bones in water for several hours to extract nutrients. Some veterinarians also suggest adding some apple cider vinegar to help release minerals from the bones. Pet-safe vegetables like carrot or pumpkin may be added, but salt, onion, garlic, masala and other spices can be avoided. Chicken bone broth is usually lighter and easier to digest, making it suitable for puppies and dogs with sensitive stomachs, while mutton bone broth tends to be richer in collagen and minerals, which may be beneficial for older dogs' joint support.

ASK AN XPERT

FITBIT

EIGHT-WEEK BEGINNER FAT LOSS WORKOUT PLAN FOR WOMEN

Starting a fitness journey can feel overwhelming, especially with unclear routines and unrealistic expectations. A structured beginner-friendly plan helps build consistency, improve strength and support fat loss without burnout. An eight-week workout approach that combines strength training, cardio and progressive overload can help women develop sustainable habits while improving overall fitness and body composition.

WORKOUT STRUCTURE OVERVIEW:

- **Frequency:** 3-4 days per week
- **Focus:** Full-body strength + cardio
- **Progression:** Gradually increase intensity, weights or repetitions over 8 weeks
- **Rest:** 1-2 days for recovery and muscle repair

KEY COMPONENTS OF THE PLAN:

1. Strength training (3 days/week)

- Focus on compound movements like squats, lunges, push-ups, rows and shoulder presses.
- Perform 2-3 sets of 8-12 reps per exercise.
- Strength training helps build muscle, which improves metabolism and supports long-term fat loss.

2. Cardio Integration (2-3 days/week)

- Include moderate-intensity cardio such as brisk walking, cycling or elliptical workouts.
- Sessions can last 20-30 minutes.
- **Optional:** Add short bursts of higher intensity (intervals) as fitness improves.

3. Progressive overload

- Gradually increase weights, reps or workout intensity every 1-2 weeks.
- This ensures continuous muscle adaptation and prevents plateaus.

4. Core and mobility work

- Include core exercises like planks, leg raises, or crunches 2-3 times a week.
- Add mobility and stretching routines to improve flexibility and reduce injury risk.

WEEKLY PROGRESSION APPROACH:

- **Weeks 1-2:** Focus on learning proper form and building consistency
- **Weeks 3-4:** Slightly increase weights and intensity
- **Weeks 5-6:** Introduce more challenging variations or additional sets
- **Weeks 7-8:** Push intensity while maintaining proper technique

SUPPORTING HABITS FOR FAT LOSS

- Maintain a balanced, calorie-controlled diet with sufficient protein intake
- Stay hydrated and prioritise sleep for recovery
- Track progress through strength gains, energy levels and consistency, not just scale weight

An eight-week beginner workout plan provides a structured and realistic path toward fat loss and improved fitness. By combining strength training, cardio and gradual progression, individuals can build muscle, enhance endurance and develop long-term habits.

By Indira Chavva, fitness expert, cult — a fitness and wellness platform

WHATWHENWHYWHERE

Kannada Melody

Attend this event where melodies mingle in a soul-stirring Kannada jam session as voices and vibes blend seamlessly to tunes from the '70s, '80s and '90s. Catch yourself strumming and singing at rhythmic jamming sessions.

WHEN: April 6, 6pm
WHERE: Silaa – The Garden Cafe, Malleswaram **CALL:** 90710 96565

Laughter Therapy

Break away Monday blues, laughing at jokes to lighten your week. With a lively crowd and sharp humour, your hilarious night out awaits.

WHEN: April 6, 8.30pm
WHERE: Glens BakeHouse, Kalyan Nagar
DETAILS: bookmyshow.com

Puzzling Fun

Solve challenging puzzles in a group brain-teaser event. Crack riddles, connect the clues as you boost your problem-solving powers with lots of fun.

WHEN: April 6, 6pm onwards
WHERE: Underline Center, Domlur
DETAILS: district.in

Chess Clash

Looking for a brainy way to kickstart your week? Open to all from beginners to pros, this showcase of checkmates promises to engage you in a sharp-witted game.

WHEN: April 6, 1pm onwards
WHERE: Espressoulster Coffee, Koramangala
DETAILS: bookmyshow.com

Patty Party

Make juicy burgers hands-on at this cooking workshop. Put on your chef hats and turn simple ingredients into tasty burgers to your preferences.

WHEN: April 6, 7pm
WHERE: Fabrizo Creative Activity Hub, BTM Layout
DETAILS: bookmyshow.com

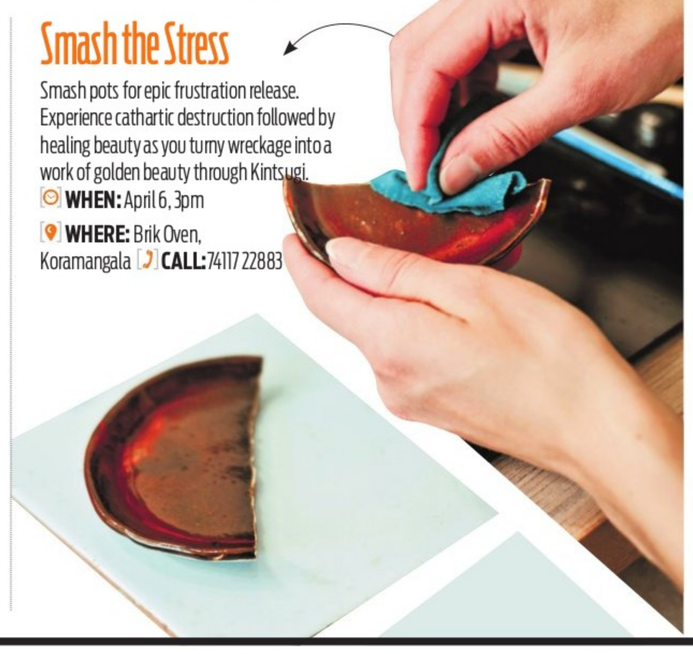
Let go of perfection and express your emotions in artistic masterpieces? Explore and unleash your creative side with colours and textures as creativity meets canvas and creates magic.

WHEN: April 6, 2pm **WHERE:** Hobby Ghar, Seshadripuram **CALL:** 95355 55644

Smash the Stress

Smash pots for epic frustration release. Experience cathartic destruction followed by healing beauty as you turny wreckage into a work of golden beauty through Kintsugi.

WHEN: April 6, 3pm
WHERE: Brik Oven, Koramangala **CALL:** 74117 22883



EXPRESS CONNECT

HAVE A RECIPE OR ART WORK TO SHARE, OR A QUESTION TO ASK?

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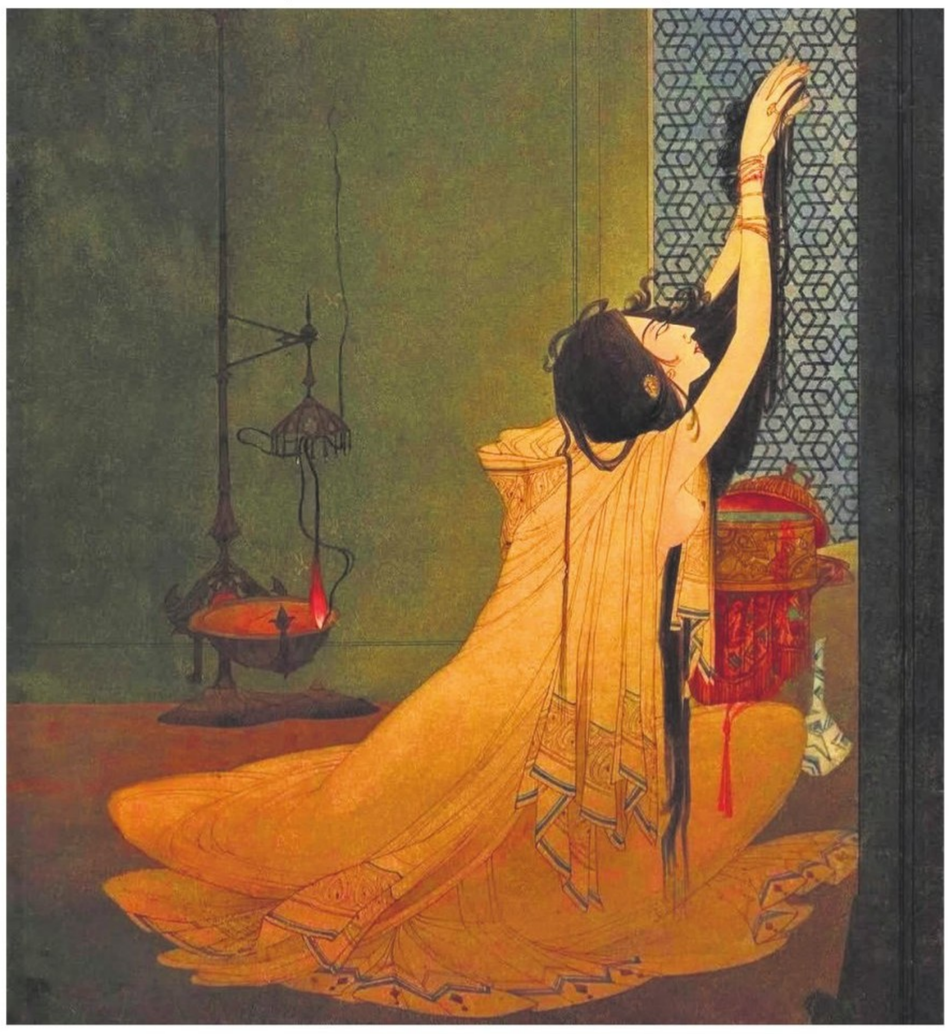
bengalurucityexpress@gmail.com
@xpress_bengaluru

ARTCORNER



FLAME OF LOVE

A woman in profile lifts her hair towards a jaali as an offering for her lover's return, a painting by Abdur Rahman Chughtai

VROOMING IN STYLE

Maruti Suzuki Victoris, while being a beauty that turns heads, also proves mighty on the road

LEKSHMI C PILLAI

THE competition in the mid-size SUV segment is tight now. And to compete, Maruti Suzuki has two cars. Even after bringing in the Grand Vitara, the largest car manufacturer couldn't outplay the market leader, the Hyundai Creta. And last September, they introduced the Victoris, based on the same platform as Grand Vitara and Toyota Hyryder.

The Victoris also bagged the Indian Car of the Year Award. However, the hype is focused on the strong hybrid version; for many, the normal petrol version (mild hybrid) is the most suitable one. So, I decided to use it for a pretty long time and see its real worth.

I drove the manual-gear top variant for over 1,000 kilometres. Here I share my experiences and observations.

First, a little background. Victoris comes with the same engine options as Grand Vitara and Hyryder. The 1.5L strong hybrid combines a 1.5-litre 3-cylinder petrol engine (92.45 PS/122 Nm) with an AC synchronous motor (80 PS/141 Nm) for a total system output of 116 PS. It uses an e-CVT transmission and features three driving modes: Eco, Normal and Power.

The 1.5L mild hybrid features a 1.5-litre 4-cylinder K15C engine producing 103 PS and 137-139 Nm of torque. It is paired with a five-speed manual or a six-speed torque converter automatic, available in both 2WD and AWD configurations.

The next, the 1.5L S-CNG has a 1.5-litre four-cylinder engine to produce 88 PS and 121.5 Nm of torque. It is available with a five-speed manual transmission.

Its automatic top variant is the first Maruti Suzuki car to get Advanced Driver Assist Systems (ADAS). Also, Victoris scored a five-star rating in Bharat and Global NCAP tests.

Let's take a detailed look.

THE BEAUTY

The sharp design language in the front of the car definitely attracts many eyes on the street. Segmented LED daytime running lamps and a chiselled bumper, with a wide air dam, are the main visual elements at the front.

There are strong character lines along the sides. The squared wheel arches with plastic cladding also give a muscular look. In certain angles, it looks like an elongated Brezza.

Connected tail lamps are the signature at the rear. The blackened roof line that slopes towards the rear imparts a longer look to the car. The indicator lights are tiny and placed at the end of the tail lamp strip.

CAR OF THE YEAR

Maruti Suzuki India Limited has announced that its all-new SUV Victoris has been awarded the 'Indian Car of the Year (ICOTY)'. ICOTY is India's most prestigious automotive award, judged by a panel comprising 12 leading magazines and 19 experts. This marks the third model and fifth overall win for Maruti Suzuki.

SPACIOUS CABIN

My model is decked up in ivory and black. The dashboard is layered, with the infotainment screen standing atop. There are physical toggle switches for AC and a rotary knob for the volume. And, for the first time, Maruti gets a fully digital 10.25-inch instrument cluster.

The new steering wheel features physical buttons. Seats are comfortable and supportive. However, fitting three passengers in the rear row is not an easy task. Front seats are ventilated. With the sunroof, the cabin looks airy and spacious. The petrol version has the most user-friendly boot space. As Victoris comes without spare wheels, that slot is also available as luggage space. (Spare wheel is available as an accessory).

REFINED PERFORMANCE

The 103hp engine, coupled with a five-speed manual gearbox, offers refined performance. It is not for the sports enthusiasts out there, but for day-to-day drives. The performance is linear. And quick overtakes need planned gear shifts. Overall, the predictability of the power train helps. Light clutch and precise gear shifts make driving an easy task.

The average fuel efficiency during my drive was 14.1 km. I drove around both the highways and the city to verify the figure. For reference, the ARAI-certified figure is 21 kmpl.

THE VERDICT

The manual variants are priced in the band of ₹10.50 lakh to 16 lakh. For someone who is budget-conscious and doesn't drive much, the Petrol Manual is the easiest option in the Victoris portfolio.

XPRESS HIGHWAY
SEGMENT ON WHAT'S REVVING UP IN THE AUTOMOTIVE SECTOR

The writer is a freelance auto expert who hosts TV shows and anchors the YouTube channel 'CARKADUVA'

NEW RELEASE

TVS LAUNCHES ORBITER V1

TVS Motor Company has introduced Orbiter V1 with 1.8 kWh as the most accessible electric scooter in the company's lineup. The company also introduced Battery-As-A-Service (BaaS) across its EV portfolio. With the addition of TVS Orbiter V1 and BaaS, its EV scooter range now starts at ₹49,999 (ex-showroom Delhi). Customers who prefer the TVS Orbiter V1 without BaaS, can purchase it at ₹84,500 (ex-showroom Delhi, inclusive of PM e-Drive). With this launch, the TVS Orbiter range is now available in two variants – V1 with 1.8 kWh and V2 with 3.1 kWh. Designed for city commuting, the Orbiter V1 delivers a certified IDC range of 86km and supports 0–80 per cent charging in approximately two hours and 20 minutes.

NEW RENAULT DUSTER LAUNCHED

Renault India has launched the all-new Renault Duster, with turbo petrol prices starting at ₹10.49 lakh (ex-showroom Delhi). The Turbo TCe 160 delivers 163 PS and 280 Nm, paired with either a six-speed wet-clutch DCT calibrated for Indian conditions or a six-speed manual transmission. The strong hybrid combines a 1.8-litre engine with a 1.4 kWh battery, enabling up to 80 per cent EV driving in city conditions.

NEW SKODA KUSHAQ

Škoda Auto India has announced prices and the start of customer deliveries for the upgraded new Kushaq. With segment-first technologies like an all-new eight-speed torque converter automatic transmission, the new Kushaq 1.0 TSI and new Kushaq 1.5 TSI both follow Škoda Auto India's strategy of making European engineering and five-star safety more accessible on Indian roads. The new Kushaq 1.0 TSI range begins at ₹10,69,000. Targeted at performance-enthusiasts, the new Kushaq 1.5 TSI with the much acclaimed seven-speed DSG is available from ₹18,79,000.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **Bhavimani Venkatrao,** S/o Manikrao, Aged about 40 years, residing at No.C-403, Yelahanka, Bengaluru - 560064, have changed my minor son's name from **BHAVIMANI SIDDHARTH** to **BHAVIMANI ANKIT,** vide affidavit dated 28/3/2026 sworn to before T Mallikarjuna Advocate and Notary Bangalore

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **Ashwini.S** W/o Yogendra Mallikaarjuna., aged 35 years, residing at No. A-301, SLV Park view Apartment, Sir M. Vishveshwaraiah Layout, 5th Block, Ullalu, 560110, I declare that I am swearing to this affidavit on my behalf and also on behalf of my husband Sri. Yogendra Mallikarjuna, we have changed our minor daughter's name from **"HAMSINI VELPULA YOGENDRA"** to **"HAVISHI YOGENDRA"** as our own will and interest, vide affidavit dated 2/4/2026 sworn to before K V Bachi Reddy Advocate and Notary Bangalore

AFFIDAVIT

I, **Mrs. JAYASREE SANTHAKUMARI,** Wife of Mr.N.L.Bejoy Nath, Present Residential Address: Residing at #271, Daddys Garden Phase 2, Kammasandra Village, Bangalore - 560100, hereby stating that **JAYASREE SANTHAKUMARI** is my true and correct/ official/ documentary name the same mentioned in the Pan Card, Passport, Marriage Certificate, Driving License etc., That my name mentioned as **Mrs. PRIYA BEJOY** in Property documents i.e., in Sale Deed, dated 01-10-2005, bearing No. ANK-1-09025-2005-06, of Book-I, in the office of the Sub-Registrar, Anekal, Bangalore. Hence hereby I am stating that **Mrs. JAYASREE SANTHAKUMARI and Mrs. PRIYA BEJOY** are one and the same and the said names belongs to me only. And I hereby authorize and request all persons to designate and address me by **JAYASREE SANTHAKUMARI** only from this day. The same was confirmed vide Notarized Affidavit, dt: 04/04/2026, sworn to before Notary public Mohammed Hussain.K, Bangalore.

BOTH NAMES ARE SAME

I, MANJUNATH H.M S/o muniyappa, age: 31 years, R/O 16/A, Near ganesh Temple, A krishnappa Nagar, carmelaram Bengalore That, above mentioned my name as MANJUNATH H.M and MANJUNATHA HALANAYAKANAHALLI MUNIYAPPA Both the above names are one & the same person vide affidavit Dated : 02 APR 2026 Advocate & Notary KANIKHA RAJA BANGALORE.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

CHANGE OF NAME

CHANGE OF SURNAME

I,**GOLLA HARSHA** (Old Name) S/o **GOLLA RAM MOORTHY,** residing at D.No. 6-7/, P.Kothuru, Mogarala Palle, Gudipala (Mandal),Chittoor District, A.P.517132 that I have changed my surname from **GOLLA** to **GOALLA**. Hence I have changed my name as **GOALLA HARSHA** (New Name) for all future purposes.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **Manikanta Ashok**, Residing at No 18/4/5, Ranganatha Site No 5, 1st Cross, Mangammanapalya Road, Near Ayyappa Temple, Bengaluru, Karnataka – 560068 hereby declare that my son name in school record is mentioned as **HARSHA MANIKANTA ASHOK** instead of **HARSHA-M-ASHOK**. Name has been rectified as above vide affidavit dated 19-03-26 before Notary B.M. Chandrashekar, Bangalore

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **Mrs. NOOR JAHAN BEGUM,** W/o Azeezuddin Jamadar, age 65 years, R/at No. K102/1/2, 1st Floor, 1st Main, 2nd Cross, Venkat Gowda Layout, Kempapura Hebbal, H A Farm Post, Bangalore-560 024 do hereby declare that both the names i.e. **N.A. JAMADAR** and **NOOR JAHAN BEGUM** are one the same and refers to me only, henceforth I shall be known and called as **NOOR JAHAN BEGUM** for all purposes, vide affidavit dated 04-04-2026, sworn before Advocate and Notary **S.R. RAVIKUMAR** at Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **Upendra Simha Yadoni Desai**, S/o. Chakrapani Y.D., Aged about 40 years, Residing at No. 74/2, 1st 'D' Cross, 3rd Main Road, Mathikere, Bengaluru - 560 054, Karnataka, do hereby declare that I have changed my name from **UPENDRA SIMHA YADONI DESAI** to **ADI SHESHA YADONI DESAI** vide affidavit dated 04.04.2026 sworn before K.G. Rajpal, Advocate & Notary, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **DEEPIKA JAIN**, D/o. Mohan Lal Jain, residing at No. 101, Ground Floor, KRS Endeavour, Kenchenahalli, Rajarajeshwari Nagar, Bengaluru-560098, declaring that **DEEPIKA JAIN and DEEPIKA DUGAR** names are same and belongs to me only, for future correspondences I will use my name as **DEEPIKA JAIN** only, vide affidavit dated 27.03.2026, sworn before notary S.R Thulasikrishna, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, (OLD NAME) HABIBULLA KHAN BABAJAN S/o Mr. BABAJAN KHAN, Age About Major, Residing at No. Unit No. 302, 3rd Floor, No 23, 7th Cross, 9th Main Road, 3rd Stage, Pillanna Garden, Bangalore - 560045 have changed my Name from **(OLD NAME) HABIBULLA KHAN BABAJAN** to **(NEW NAME) HABIBULLA KHAN** Vide affidavit dated 29.03.2026 sworn before Notary C SHARADA, B.Sc., LLB., Bangalore

CHANGE OF NAME

I, (OLD NAME) KALEEM AZGARI, Residing at No.574, Syed Siraj Mohalla, Daira, Channapatna Town-562160, Ramanagaram District, have changed my name from **(OLD NAME) KALEEM AZGARI** to **(NEW NAME) KALEEM AZGARI MALIKA BANO.,** vide affidavit dated 02.04.2026 sworn before Notary A.R.Nagendra., Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, the undersigned **PRASANNA RAGHAVAN** on behalf of my minor daughter **RITHVIKA PRASANNA** (new name), previously called **RITHVIKA PRASANNA RAGHAVAN** (old name), residing at No. K-046, Assetz Marq, Whitefield Hoskote Road, Kannamangala, Bangalore – 560 067 (address), do hereby solemnly declare and state that I have changed my minor daughter's name from **RITHVIKA PRASANNA RAGHAVAN** to **RITHVIKA PRASANNA** by swearing to an affidavit in front of Notary public, **Mr. K.B. Sadha Shivappa** on 03.04.2026 for all purposes.

CHANGE OF NAME

We, **RENUKA BAGI**, W/o Basappa .A Bagi age 47 years, and **BASAPPA .A BAGI,** S/o Arjun Bagi, age 49 years, both R/at No. 33, 5th Cross, Near Varchas Child Care, Gottigere New Extension, Rajarajeshwarinagar, Bengaluru-560098 do hereby declare that all the names of my son i.e. **JEEVAN BAGI, JEEVAN** and **JEEVAN BASAPPA BAGI** are one and the same and refers to my son only, vide affidavit dated 2nd April 2026, sworn before Advocate and Notary **PUTTARAMAIAH** at Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **PARIMALA RAKESH**, W/o. Shivakote Muniyappa Rakesh, residing at # 11-37, 3rd Cross, Near Halli Mane Hotel Malleswaram, Bangalore-560033, do hereby declare that I have changed my name from **PARIMALA S** to **PARIMALA RAKESH,** vide affidavit dated 02.04.2026, sworn to before C.N. Chandrashekar, Advocate & Notary Public, Govt. of India, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, RAYEESA IRSHAD KAZI, W/o. Irshad Abdul Gani Kazi, Residing at No.144, Opp Nursery, Binnamangala, Kasba Hobli, Arasinakunte, Nelamangala, Bengaluru -562123, have changed my name to **RAYEESA** vide affidavit dated: 04.04.2026 before Notary A. IDINABBA, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, (OLD NAME) RAHIMUNNISSA ABDUL JABBAR, Age about Major, Residing at No.14, Muthyallamma B Road Bharthi Nagar, Bangalore - 560051 have changed my Name from **(OLD NAME) RAHIMUNNISSA ABDUL JABBAR** to **(NEW NAME) NILUFAR** Vide affidavit dated 26.03.2026 sworn before Notary C SHARADA, B.Sc., LLB., Bangalore

CHANGE OF NAME

I, (OLD NAME) MOHAMMED SIDDIQ, Residing at No.3/8, Masjid Street, BSA Road, Frazer Town, Bengaluru 560005, have changed my name from **(OLD NAME) MOHAMMED SIDDIQ** to **(NEW NAME) MOHAMMED SIDDIQUE** vide affidavit dated 04.04.2026 sworn before Notary Gangaraju B.N., Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **SWATHI,** D/o. Jayachandra, residing at #128, 50 Feet Main Road, Hanumanthanagar, Basavanagudi, Bengaluru 560019, have changed my name to **SWATHI J**, vide Affidavit Dated: 04/04/2026 sworn before Notary **GANGARAJU.B.N,** Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **POOJITHA KAMATH S,** D/o Sateesh Kamath, age 27 years, R/at B201, No.23, Atlantis Liberty Square, 80 Feet Road, Near KSIT College, Raghuvanahalli, Bangalore-560109 do hereby declare that I have changed my name from **POOJITHA KAMATH S** to **VIBHA VARSHA KAMATH,** henceforth I shall be known and called as **VIBHA VARSHA KAMATH** for all purposes, vide affidavit dated 4-4-2026, sworn before Advocate and Notary **R.S. VIJAY** at Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **SANTOSH VASANTRAO NADIGER,** S/o. Vasantrao Nadiger, residing at No. 437, Suguna Pristine Square, 3rd Floor, Double Road, Near Shanmukha Temple, Rajarajeshwari Nagar, Bangalore-560098, do hereby declare that I have changed my name from **SANTOSH NADIGER** to **SANTOSH VASANTRAO NADIGER,** vide affidavit dated 02.04.2026, sworn to before C.N. Chandrashekar, Advocate & Notary Public, Govt. of India, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, VISHWAS VISHWAKARMA, S/o Vijaya Kumar HS, aged about 38 years, residing at No 27, Kanasu-Nanasu, Behind Govt Higher Primary School, Near Doddabele Last Bus Stop, Doddabele Main Road Doddabele, Kengeri, BENGALURU, KARNATAKA-560060 have changed my name to **VISHWAS VIJAYA KUMAR** affidavit dated 04/04/2026 sworn before advocate and notary L. Veena, Bangalore,

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **Smt. Divya Pratap Prabhu,** aged about 41years, W/o Babu Venkatappa Reddy, residing at #225, Koppa Village, Hulimangala Post, Jigani Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bengaluru - 560105, I declare that have changed my name from **"Divya Prathap Prabhu"** to **"Divya Pratap Prabhu"** in my passport records, and changed my husband's name from **"Babu Venkatappa"** to **"Babu Venkatappa Reddy"** in my passport records, and changed my date of birth from **10/05/1984"** to **"11/03/1985"**, vide affidavit dated 2/4/2026 sworn to before Sumithra N Advocate and Notary Bangalore

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Shreehari Divakara. S/o Divakara H. S, aged about 18 years, R/at E-202, Gaana Regent, Near RNS IT, Channasandra Bengaluru – 560098. I have changed my name from **SHREE HARI** To **SHREEHARI DIVAKARA** For all purposes Vide Affidavit Dated 25.03.2026 sworn before Advocate and Notary K. G. Gowthami.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **MURALI MANOHAR,** S/o Ramesh Lal Lakhanpal, aged about 60 years, R/at No. D-4, Jaffer Sheriff Apts, #46, Haines Road, Near Coles Park, Frazer Town, Bengaluru North, Bengaluru-560005, have changed my name to **MURALI MANOHAR LAKHANPAL** vide affidavit dated: 04.04.2026 before Notary **Gangaraju B.N,** Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **Mr. ANILKUMAR SHEENA AABHISHEK,** S/o. Anil Kumar, Flat No.112, 1st Floor, Wing 3, GK Tropical Springs Apartment, Channasandra Village, Bidarahalli Hobli, Bangalore East Taluk, Bangalore-67. Hereby declare that, I have changed my name from **'A S AABHISHEK, & ANIL SHEENA AABHISHEK'** to **'ANILKUMAR SHEENA AABHISHEK'** Vide Affidavit dated 04.04.2026, Sworn before Advocate and Notary Yankoba, Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, SANAH PURI (New Name), D/o. Deepak Sharma and Wife of Gaurav Puri, Residing at No.52234, Prestige Falcon City, Konanakunte Cross, Kanakapura Road, Bangalore-560062, Karnataka, India, confirm that I have changed my name from **SANAH SHARMA (Old Name)** to **SANAH PURI (New Name),** henceforth I shall be known and called as **SANAH PURI (New Name)** for all purpose, vide Affidavit dated : 04-04-2026, before Notary MOHAMMED HUSSAIN H. S, Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME

We, RAJASHEKHARA N, and NAVYASHREE V, residing at No. 143, Manchenahalli Village, Mayasandra Post, Anekal Taluk, Karnataka-562107, we have changed our daughter's name from **TAANVI R GOWDA to TAKSHAVI R GOWDA** vide affidavit dated: 04.04.2026 before Advocate and Notary K.C. Shashikala, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, (OLD NAME) ABDUL WAHEED, Age About Major, Residing at No, 4, 3rd Main, Chinnappa Garden, Jayamahal, Bangalore - 560046 have changed my Name from **(OLD NAME) ABDUL WAHEED** to **(NEW NAME) NISAR AHMED SUBHAN** Vide affidavit dated 01.04.2026 sworn before Notary C SHARADA, B.Sc., LLB., Bangalore

CHANGE OF NAME

We, **Shashi Kumar K, Mala V** residing at # 84, 4th Cross, G Main Road, Muneswara Block, P.G. Halli, Malleshwaram, Bengaluru hereby state that in our daughter **LAASYA SAI S M**'s school record Father's name mentioned as **SHASHIKUMAR K** instead of **SHASHI KUMAR K** and Mothers name is mentioned as **MALA** instead of **MALA V.** Names has been rectified as above vide affidavit dated 04-04-2026 before Notary B. Chitra, Bangalore

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **AMRITA GOPIKRISHNAN PARAKKAL**, D/o Gopikrishnan Parameshwaran, W/o Shreyas S., age 27 years, presently R/at No. 13A, 3rd Main, 12th Cross, Reddy Layout, Ravindra Nagara, T. Dasarahalli, Bangalore-560057 do hereby declare that I have changed my name from **AMRITA GOPIKRISHNAN PARAKKAL** to **TAARA SHREYAS**, henceforth I shall be known and called as **TAARA SHREYAS** for all purposes, vide affidavit dated 1st April 2026, sworn before Advocate and Notary **RAVI KUMAR .V** at Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **Uday Reddy. K,** S/o Chiranjivi Reddy, aged about 40 years, R/ at No. 1, Magadi Main Road, Behind Venkateshwara Talkies, Doddgollarahatti, Bangalore Urban, Bangalore-560091. Hereby declare that, I have changed my minor Son's name from **'MOKSHITH,'** to **'MOKSHITH. K',** Vide Affidavit dated 04.04.2026, Sworn before Advocate and Notary Aruna. V, Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **NARASIMHA MURTHY**, S/o. Late Narasimhaiah, residing at No. 24/1086, 15th Main Road, Avalahalli Main Road, Sringara, BSK 1st Stage, Bangalore-560050, have changed my name to **N NARASIMHA MURTHY**, vide affidavit dated 03.04.2026, sworn before notary H.G Venkataramu, Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME

WE, **1) Giridhar Gopal Soni,** S/o Bharat Lal Soni, Aged about 44 years and **2) Jyotsana Soni,** W/o Giridhar Gopal Soni, Aged about 42 years, both are residing at 14/33, 10th C Main Road, Rajajinagar, 6th Block, Bengaluru North, Bengaluru - 560010, I declare that, our name was given to my daughter's school authority in our name wrongly entered as **GIRDHAR GOPAL SONI.B** instead of **GIRIDHAR GOPAL SONI** AND **JYOTSANA ARYA SONI,** instead of **JYOTSANA SONI,** vide affidavit dated 2/4/2026 sworn to before G Dayananda Advocate and Notary Bangalore

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **CHETHANA.B.N** D/o Mr. Narayan Gowda B.G. aged about 38 years, residing at No.2461, 2nd Cross, 2nd Main, Behind Raghavendra Hospital, Bengaluru North, Bengaluru - 560057,I decare that below mentioned my Both names **CHETHANA B N** and **CHETHANA BHARATH** pertain to one and the same person. I declare that my correct name is **CHETHANA B N**, vide affidavit dated 4/4/2026 sworn to before Anuradha D Advocate and Notary Bangalore

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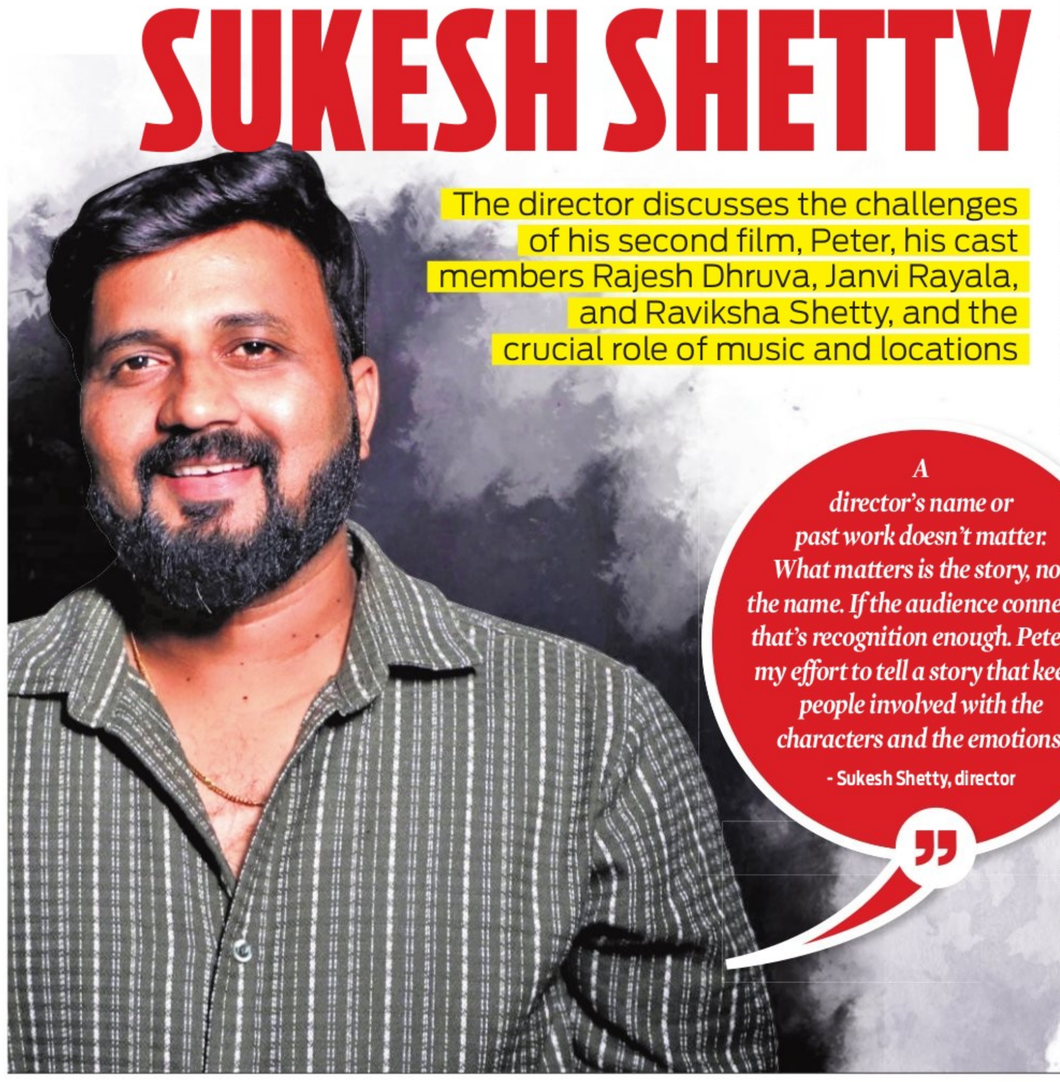
AUDIENCES CHANGE OVER TIME, THE MAKING SHOULD AS WELL: SUKESH SHETTY

The director discusses the challenges of his second film, Peter, his cast members Rajesh Dhruva, Janvi Rayala, and Raviksha Shetty, and the crucial role of music and locations



A director's name or past work doesn't matter. What matters is the story, not the name. If the audience connects, that's recognition enough. Peter is my effort to tell a story that keeps people involved with the characters and the emotions.
- Sukesh Shetty, director

CE FEATURES

AFTER making his debut with *Doordarshana* (2023), Sukesh Shetty's second film, Peter, came with its own set of challenges. The director talks about how he shaped the story, the characters, and the audience experience, ahead of the film's release on April 10. "After Doordarshana, I realised the audience has become very selective about which films they choose to watch in theatres," he says. "People want an experience. Whether it was *KGF*, *Rangitaranga*, or *Kantara*, these films had content, freshness, and a reason for people to stay in their seats. I wanted to make something that keeps you involved for two-and-a-half hours—through characters, emotions, and the setting—where everything clicks together."

He adds, "Audiences change over time, and the making should as well. Sometimes, even good films don't click. I wanted to figure out why and make a film that the audience enjoys fully."

The title Peter was chosen carefully. "I like titles that stand out. Peter is simple, universal, and easy to remember. The character becomes Peter not by what he does alone but through how others see him. The conflicts and relationships around him define him. We wanted it to feel real." Casting was also a key decision. Rajesh Dhruva, familiar from television, plays the titular character. "I wanted someone without a strong screen image. Peter had to feel like Peter, not Rajesh Dhruva. We worked on his style, his tone, and a slightly darker look. The audience should see the character, not the actor." About Janvi Rayala and Raviksha Shetty, he says, "Janvi fit the role perfectly. Her body language and presence suited the character. Raviksha as Meera brought freshness. Her curly hair and energy added something special. Together with Janvi as Radha, they help the audience follow Peter's story."

On the shooting challenges after *Doordarshana*, Sukesh says, "The tricky part was choosing the right kind of story, something commercial or something more layered. I wanted to keep the audience's attention without forcing emotions. Every scene had to feel natural." The film's locations, Madikeri and Bhagamandala, also played a role. "The terrain added authenticity, but it was tough to shoot. Every shot had to make sense with the surroundings." Music, he adds, was planned right from the start. "I worked closely with Ritvik Muralidhar for three to four months while writing the script. We wanted the music to feel like the heartbeat of the film. Releasing the album under Think Music was a proud moment."

On what matters most to him as a filmmaker, he says, "A director's name or past work doesn't matter. What matters is the story, not the name. If the audience connects, that's recognition enough. Peter is my effort to tell a story that keeps people involved with the characters and the emotions."

Rajinikanth drops *Jailer 2* update

CE FEATURES

ON Saturday, actor Rajinikanth spoke to the media about two of his upcoming films: *Jailer 2* and the Kamal Haasan reunion, both directed by Nelson. The actor said that the principal photography for the *Jailer* sequel has been completed and that the film is in its "finishing stages". He also announced that the production team will reveal *Jailer 2*'s release date in the next few days.

On the other hand, Rajinikanth revealed that his film with Kamal Haasan would go on floors in August. With Anirudh composing music for *Jailer 2*, the sequel also brings back cast members from the original, including Ramya Krishnan, Vinayakan, Mirnaa, Yogi Babu, and Shivarajkumar. The new additions to the *Jailer* franchise include Jatin Sarna and Suraj Venjaramoodu. Rajinikanth is also teaming up with Don-fame Cibi Chakaravarthi for *Thalaivar 173*, which is produced by Kamal Haasan. On the other hand, Kamal Haasan is headlining action choreographer duo Anbariv's directorial debut.

An evocative blend of small dreams and costly emotions

A SHARADHAA

WRITTEN, directed, and headlined by Aryan Tejas, *Naanu Karunakara* unfolds in Bengaluru, a city of traffic signals, rented houses, and days built on showing up to work. It follows Karunakara (Aryan Tejas), his wife, and their young son. They are a middle-class family navigating a life that constantly feels paused. Their world feels lived in: bike rides through traffic, sudden stops due to empty fuel tanks, and small arguments that carry the weight of larger frustrations. It feels more like observation than storytelling, though at times it relies too heavily on observation.

Karunakara is instantly recognisable. He is well-meaning, slightly careless, and caught between who he is and who he wants to be. He shifts between being an assistant director, picking up film and ad shoots when available, and taking on painting jobs when they aren't. The instability is constant. What keeps him grounded is home, a wife, Mamtha (Radha Bhagavati), who endures more than she shows, and a son (Bhavish Gowda) who still sees him without judgment. Money is uncertain, but there is warmth and a quiet hope that things might somehow improve. The film trusts this hope a bit too easily.

His wife, however, faces reality. She depends on the house owner's phone to stay connected and carries the burden of stability. Her desire is simple: a better home, a car, and a life that feels secure. The film understands her but doesn't always let her voice be heard. It all comes down to their son (Bhavish Gowda) and a toy car. Not just any toy, but one of those pricey, battery-operated mini cars that now cost more than they should. What started as a simple plaything has turned into a luxury. The child wants it. The father wants to give it. That small object represents love, dignity, and self-worth.

The film taps into something deeply human: for many middle-class parents, love often shows through what they can't afford. It presents a quietly unsettling idea. By the time parents finally save enough to buy a child's wish, has the child already outgrown it? The film explores this discomfort but stops short of fully addressing it. Karunakara's journey becomes less about purchasing a toy and more about proving something to himself. He avoids shortcuts and wants to earn enough to buy the car. Even when he tries alternatives, like having a wooden version made, it fails to meet the child's expectations. The gap between what he intends to do and reality widens. The film stays with this idea but circles it rather than deepening it.

There's also a subtle examination of ambition. The film strips away the glamour of becoming a director and shows the price: instability, delayed responsibilities, and the risk of drifting away from family. It asks whether a dream can coexist with duty and sincerity, without making it dramatic. It's a strong question, even if the film hesitates to explore it further. The bond between father and son stands out. The child sees a hero. The father sees his flaws. A silent understanding grows in between. The film builds through moments replete with conversations, compromise, and hesitation. Even the wife's frustration stems from exhaustion, not anger, though conflicts that could have been more intense often get resolved too easily.

The writing isn't always tight. Some scenes drag on and take longer than they should, occasionally slipping into a familiar, almost television-like pattern. But the feeling at the heart of the film carries it through these rough patches. Performances do much of the heavy lifting. Aryan Tejas, as director and actor, understands his material. He plays Karunakara with restraint, allowing doubt, stubbornness, and family connection to quietly surface. Radha Bhagavati matches that tone, and together they feel less like characters and more like a couple you might know. Bhavish Gowda serves as the emotional anchor, while Kari Subbu, Apoorva Shri, BM Venkatesh, and MK Mutt populate the world naturally.

Naanu Karunakara remains a modest, emotion-driven film. It has rough edges, and even if it lingers a bit too long on its idea, its sincerity remains. What lasts is the ache of timing, small dreams, and a life where, by the time you can afford something, the need for it has already passed. It is a simple story, told with honesty, but one that could have trusted its own conflicts more.

RATING 3/5

NAANU KARUNAKARA
Director: Aryan Tejas
Cast: Aryan Tejas, Radha Bhagavati, Bhavish Gowda, M K Mutt, Kari Subbu, Apoorva Shri, and B M Venkatesh

Unfocused and emotionally distant

A SHARADHAA

PRADEEP Varma, who has built his name as a composer, turns director with *Premi*. When someone rooted in music takes up storytelling, you expect a sense of flow, a grip over mood. That assurance is missing here. The film drifts. It doesn't settle into a tone, and it rarely feels in control of its own pace.

The story begins with a childhood marriage, done without thought, almost like a ritual that means little at the time. But it stays. Years later, Premkumar (Advik Siddalingaiah) grows up unable to move past it. He turns away from a relationship in the present, held back by something he does not fully understand himself. What starts as hesitation becomes a search. He goes looking for answers tied to a past that refuses to fade. The idea has weight. It needed a steady hand. Instead, the film stretches itself thin. The first half moves slowly, but not with purpose. Scenes go on longer than they should and the same emotions are repeated without adding anything new. The writing does not build tension or curiosity; it simply stays where it is.

Advik shows intent, but there is visible hesitation in his performance. He seems to know what the character is going through, but that does not come through clearly on screen. Saatvika Rao, who plays Priya/ Madhumati has a calm presence, but the role feels underwritten. She reacts more than she drives the story, and at any given point her body language looks tiresome and lethargic. Shobitha's part as Tina exists to support the track, without leaving a mark. Even the glamorous special song adds nothing to the film and only breaks what little focus it has.

Pradeep Varma casts himself as Vara, a key presence in the narrative. He pushes the character strongly, but the performance feels loud in places. It needed restraint. The impact gets diluted when every emotion is pushed to the surface.

The film improves slightly in the latter portions. There is some movement in the story, and a few developments try to bring things together. But this shift comes late. By then, the film has already lost its grip.

The music works in parts, but the background score does not add much to the scenes. The visuals remain plain. Nothing stands out. Editing becomes a major issue, and overall, the film needed to be shorter, tighter, and more to the point, without being repetitive.

There are also symbolic touches, like the use of Dasara dolls, which feels forced. They don't blend into the story, and stand out for the wrong reasons.

Premi, a film about finding love, stays on the surface. It keeps repeating the same idea without building on it, and that is where it loses its hold. What could have been moving ends up feeling distant.

PREMI
Director: Pradeep Varma
Cast: Advik Siddalingaiah, Shravya Rao, S Pradeep Varma, Shobitha, Harish Ukkadagatri, Suresh Babu and Dwitha K Gowda

MARVEL'S DEFENDERS TO REUNITE?

CE FEATURES

A POSSIBLE reunion of *Marvel's* street-level heroes seems to be in the works, with Mike Colter, Finn Jones and Krysten Ritter recently spotted together on the sets of *Daredevil: Born Again Season 3*. The sighting has sparked speculation that the trio, who previously headlined their own *Marvel* series, could be reprising their roles as Luke Cage, Iron Fist and Jessica Jones, respectively, marking a return of *the Defenders* lineup.

All three actors first rose to prominence within the *Marvel* television universe on Netflix. Ritter led Jessica Jones, which debuted in 2015 and went on to run for three seasons. Colter followed with *Luke Cage* in 2016, while Jones fronted Iron Fist in 2017. While the series debuted on Netflix, all of these titles have since moved from Netflix to JioHotstar.

The characters were previously brought together in the 2017 crossover miniseries, The Defenders, where they teamed up with *Daredevil* (Charlie Cox) to battle the shadow organisation known as *The Hand*.